SUNDAY
December 28, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
26 Pages ₹ 8.00

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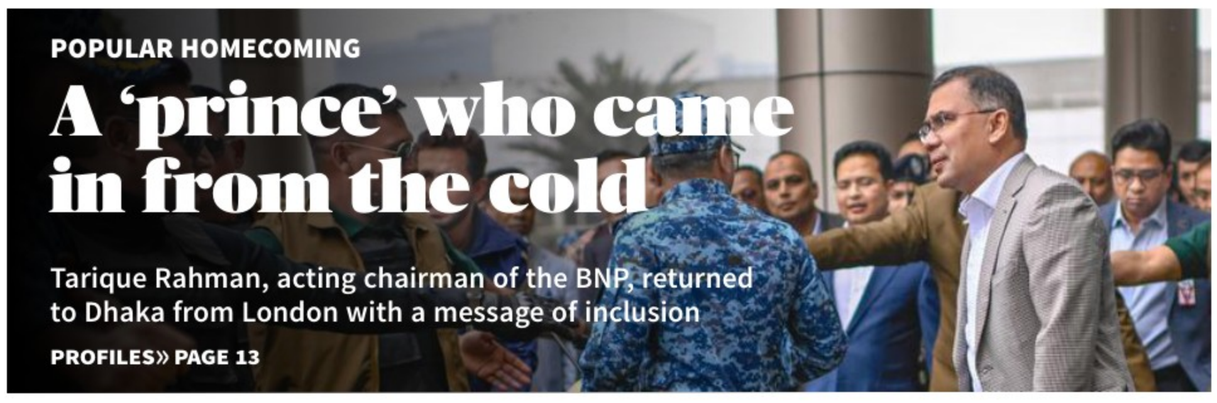

POPULAR HOMECOMING

A 'prince' who came in from the cold

Tarique Rahman, acting chairman of the BNP, returned to Dhaka from London with a message of inclusion

PROFILES» PAGE 13

'Fake anti-rabies vaccine pulled from shelves'

NEWS » PAGE 9

What are India's diplomatic headwinds?

FAQ » PAGE 12

England ends barren run in Australia

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

CM fails to hold talks with Rahul on reshuffle

BENGALURU
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who attended the CWC meeting in New Delhi, has not been able to hold talks on the possible Cabinet reshuffle and other State-related issues with Rahul Gandhi. » PAGE 5

Poll pact: BJP leaves it to leadership

BENGALURU
State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra said the Karnataka unit will abide by the decision of the central leadership on its electoral alliance with the JD(S). » PAGE 5

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MAGAZINE » 8 PAGES

10.56 lakh names cut on draft rolls in Assam

Special revision held by EC in the State from November 22 to December 20 to ensure 'accurate, transparent' electoral list, says CEO; hearings begin for 32 lakh 'unmapped' electors in Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
Moyurie Som
KOLKATA

The names of 10.56 lakh voters have been deleted on the draft electoral rolls of Assam which were published on Saturday after a house-to-house verification of the voter lists during the special revision exercise conducted by the Election Commission in the State from November 22 to December 20.

Of the voters whose names were deleted, almost 4.79 lakh are dead, over 5.23 lakh have shifted, and 53,619 were found to have duplicate entries.

The EC has completed a special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, and the SIR is underway in 12 States and Union Territories. Unlike these, however, Assam is undergoing a "special revision".

In West Bengal, hearings began on Saturday for around 32 lakh "unmapped" electors, as part of the SIR. In all, 3,234 desks were set up across the State where voters with no recorded links to the 2002 voters' list queued up to get their identification recorded and verified. A high-ranking official at the Chief Electoral Officer's office told *The Hindu* that over 25,000 out of the expected 32,000 electors attended hearings across the State.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7
TRINAMOOL QUESTIONS EC » PAGE 7

Roll in numbers

The draft rolls in Assam have been published after house-to-house verification of electoral rolls under a 'special revision'

Total number of electors in the State: 2,52,02,775

Number of 'D voters' (whose cases are pending before Foreigners' Tribunals) 93,021

Names deleted following death of voters 4,78,992

Number of voters moved from registered addresses 5,23,680

Demographically similar entities 53,619

A booth-level officer during enumeration for the 'special revision' in Guwahati, Assam. ANI

Family members dispersed on Kerala rolls

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
After cases of names of family members being scattered within a polling station or across multiple stations emerged following the release of the draft electoral rolls in Kerala, the State's Chief Electoral Officer has said that corrective measures will be taken. » PAGE 6

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi at a press conference in New Delhi on Saturday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Cong. to campaign against new rural job Act from January 5

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress will launch the MGNREGA Bachao Andolan, a nationwide agitation against the new Viksit Bharat G-RAM-G legislation that replaced the UPA-era rural employment guarantee programme, on January 5. The announcement came after a meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) in New Delhi on Saturday, where members of the party's highest decision-making body pledged to protect the right to work.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, equated the new legislation with "demonetisation", saying that it had been drafted by the Prime Minister's Office "without taking anyone into confidence, neither the Minister concerned nor the Cabinet".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, who chaired the meeting, said the party would do everything to save the MGNREGA at "all costs". "It is not merely a scheme, but a constitutional right to work for the rural poor," he said.

The meeting was attended by Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who had headed the National Advisory Council which drafted the MGNREGA in the Congress-led UPA's first term.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7

Cong. leaders flay Pinarayi, but get rapped by AICC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While leaders of the ruling Congress in Karnataka reacted strongly on Saturday to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's criticism of "bulldozer action" to evict people in two colonies in Kogilu Layout in Bengaluru, the party's own central leaders dispproved of the action.

On Saturday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said that Mr. Vijayan had spoken without knowing facts about encroachment clearance that took place earlier in the week. Mr. Siddaramaiah pointed out that houses were built illegally on hazardous waste dumping grounds. Mr. Shivakumar asked Mr. Vijayan to refrain from "interfering in Karnataka's affairs".

However, AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal later in the day chastised the Karnataka leaders on the clearance drive. He said on X, "Conveyed the AICC's serious concern that such actions should have been undertaken with far greater caution, sensitivity, and compassion, keeping the human impact at the centre."

FULL REPORT » PAGE 3

Man and his beasts

A jockey rides his buffaloes during the 'Kambala slush-track race' at Bangra Kulur in Mangaluru on Saturday. PTI

Anti-poaching camp staff killed in tiger attack in Bandipur

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

A staff member of an anti-poaching camp was killed in a tiger attack at the Bandipur Tiger Reserve on Saturday.

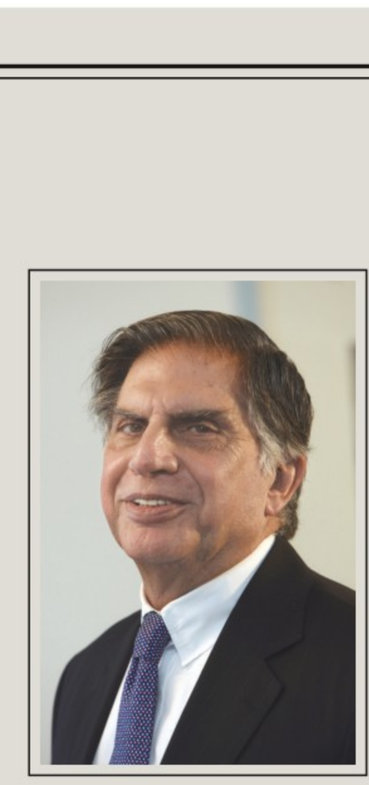
The deceased has been identified as Sanna Haida, who was attached to the Maralahalla anti-poaching camp in the Bandipur division and was engaged in regular patrolling duty in the tiger reserve.

S. Prabhakaran, director, Bandipur Tiger Reserve, said Haida was accompanied by three others while gathering grass seeds when the tiger pounced from the thickets and injured him. This happened at around 12.30 p.m.

Though all the anti-poaching camp staff were armed, there was hardly any response time as the attack was sudden and swift.

Haida suffered severe injuries and died on the spot. Originally from Hunsur, he had moved with his family to Bandipur after being deployed for patrolling duty to protect the wildlife and forest.

Forest officials rushed to the location soon after receiving information about the incident and shifted the body for post-mortem.



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In three years, 9,639 cases of missing children reported in Karnataka; 1,094 remain untraced

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

In the last three years (from 2023 to November 15, 2025), 9,639 children have gone missing across Karnataka and 1,094 of them remain untraced.

Bengaluru city accounted for nearly a third of these cases, followed by Bengaluru Rural and Tumakuru districts. In terms of gender, a whopping 6,894 cases were those of girls, with 825 cases pending. Home Minister G. Parameshwara revealed these figures in his reply to a question from Member of Legislative Council Umashree during the recently-concluded winter session of the Legislature in Belagavi.

In 2023, 3,039 missing cases were reported, and 77 cases remain unresolved. Of te 3,411 missing children reported in 2024, 145 are as yet untraced. Till November 15, 2025, 3,189 missing cases were reported, and 872 of them are as yet not cracked.

In Bengaluru, 3,268 missing cases were reported and 426 of them are pending. In Bengaluru Rural district, 694 children were reported missing, and 55 remain untraced. Tumkur district ranked third, with 450 cases reported in the last three years. Out of these, 33 are unresolved.

The Supreme Court on December 9, 2025, had directed the Union government to furnish six years of nationwide data on missing children and to appoint a dedicated officer in the Union Home Ministry to ensure effective coordination with States and Union Territories in compiling such information. The court was hearing a public interest litigation petition which highlighted the rising number of children who remain untraced across several States.

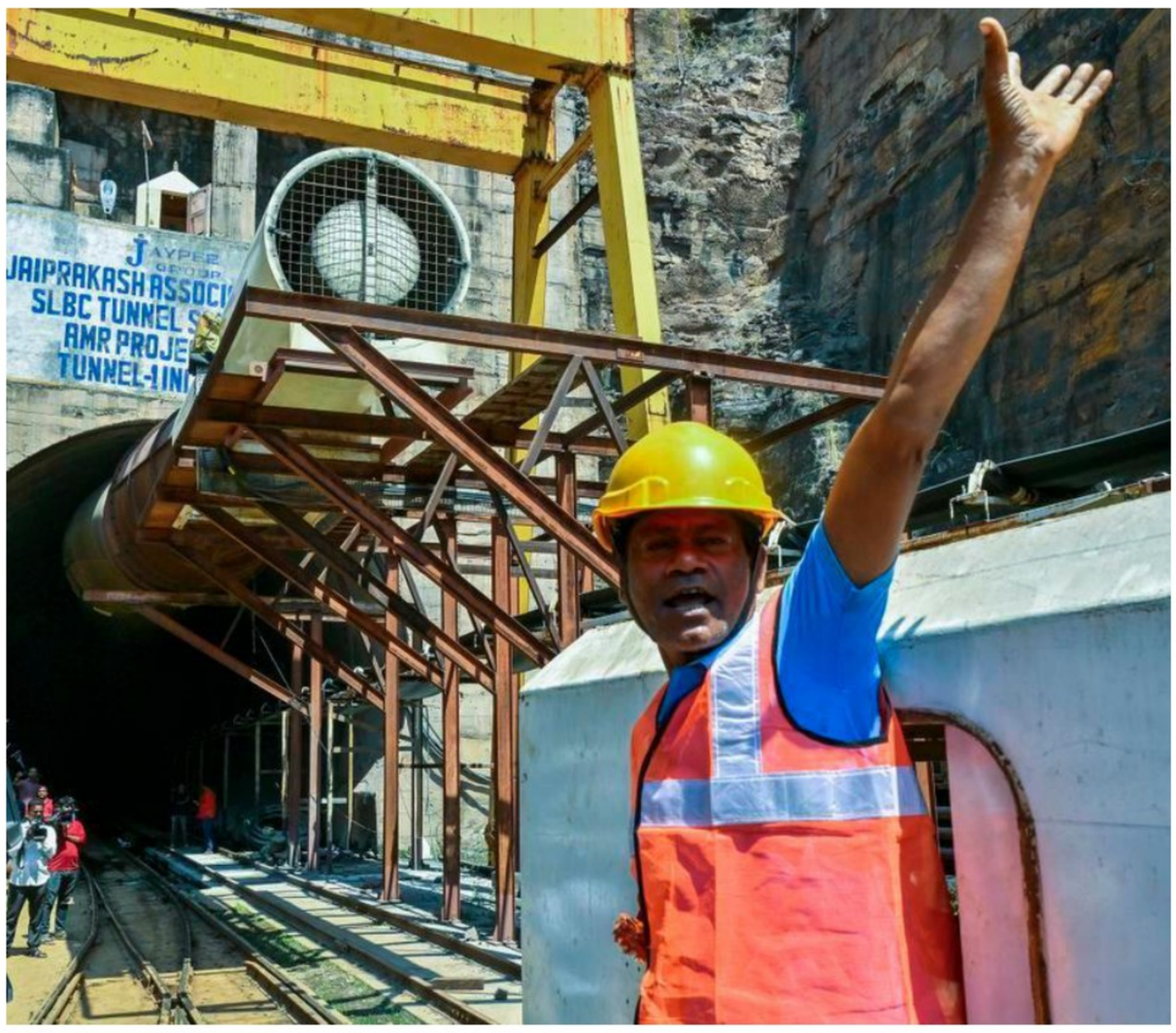
Reflecting on the high numbers, Chairperson of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) Shashidhar S. Kosambe said that he had written to the Director-General & Inspector-General of Police (DG&IGP) asking for a detailed report on the number of cases of missing children in the State, the reason, and the details of the children who have been traced.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Thippeswamy K.T., Member of KSCPCR, said that the commission had noticed that many of these cases involved children from Class 8 to II PUC. He said there were also many cases of young girls and boys falling in love and then going missing.

"A committee has been formed in each district headed by the Superintendent of Police to take steps to find the missing children," he said. "An Open House Programme (OHP) is held every Thursday in the jurisdiction of each police station for children," he added.

Hues of haze: A massive fire broke out at the Maha Kumbh mela at Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh on January 19. A cylinder blast lead to the inferno, authorities said. No casualty was reported in the incident. SANDEEP SAXENA

Sacred confluence: Officials estimate that over 1.44 crore devotees gathered to take the holy bath at the Triveni Sangam on the occasion of Maha Shivratri and the culmination of the Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj on February 26. R.V MOORTHY



Tunnel tragedy: A worker, part of a multi-agency expert team, involved in operations to rescue eight men trapped inside the Srisailam Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel on February 24. The tunnel at Nagarkurnool district in Telangana collapsed two days earlier. After days of efforts, the workers were confirmed dead. NAGARA GOPAL

Silenced aftermath: A woman sits next to the body of her husband after terrorists attacked a group of tourists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on April 22. The mass shooting incident left 26 civilians dead and lead to a military escalation with Pakistan. PTI

Visual vignettes

Faith, fault lines and fortitude pressed on through 2025

Looking back at 2025 through an Indian lens was not easy especially when tracking the months – incident by incident, many of them tough on the country and her people.

The big one very early in the year was the Maha Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj – a 45 day mega spectacle stretching the limits of the administration of many cities. Occurring in a cycle of once in 144 years, devotees from across the country and then some came visiting. It did not go incident-free, however. Stampedes occurred both at the Kumbh, and at New Delhi Railway Station where the rush to get a seat on a train to Prayagraj claimed lives: 18 of them at the railway station, and many more at the Kumbh itself. Going by ground reports, the trigger in both cases was appallingly sad, and could have been easily averted with better planning and management.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir was chugging along at a steady pace with tourism bringing in value to the local population, but everything changed on a fateful afternoon at Baisaran Valley in Pahalgam on April 22. Terrorists killed 25 tourists and a pony rider operator.

The shock waves were expectedly larger the life. From across the political spectrum, there was condemnation. And the photograph of a newly married woman next to her slain husband went viral: what followed was India taking on neighbouring Pakistan in an armed attack called Operation Sindoor. It was hard to miss the symmetry in the imagery, or the reasoning.

Elsewhere, the Himalayan States of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh continued to face landslides and floods almost from where it left off in 2024. The world's youngest mountains and the people living amid them have had some nightmarish moments in the past few years, and 2025 was no exception.

In a country as large as India, the year saw some brilliant moments of inspiration too. The National Defence Academy covered itself in glory when its first batch of women cadets, standing shoulder to shoulder with men, passed out as officers from Khadakwasla. It was a moment to be cherished, and the beaming smiles captured on camera. When talking gender, Harmanpreet Kaur and her girls lifted their first-ever Indian Women's Cricket World Cup in 2025.

But as the year comes to a close, the familiar yet disastrous weather takes a nose dive, by way of air quality across the northern plains. The National Capital Region struggles even as the Delhi government tries short-term measures like pole-mounted mist sprays to take down a Goliath – an AQI that is closer to 'severe' most times than not.

Text by Dinesh Krishnan

Myth reborn: Theyyam Kandanar Kelan, a deity based on the legend of an archer-farmer, braves blazing flames in an hour-long ritualistic frenzy at the Kaliyattam festival held in March in Kannur, Kerala. THULASI KAKKAT

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State saw steady flow of investments in 2025

The coming years are expected to witness a flurry of activities as projects won during 2025 will begin to take shape on the ground across the State

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

In 2025, Karnataka attracted an investment of ₹10.27 lakh crore through its biannual investment exposition, Global Investors' Meet (GIM), held in February.

M.B. Patil, Minister for Large and Medium Industries, said that over 60% of these investments have been realised in the 2025 calendar year, while 2026 and 2027 would witness a flurry of activities as these projects would begin to take physical shape on the ground across the State.

The State has an ambitious goal to attract ₹7.5 lakh crore in investments and create 20 lakh jobs by 2030 under the Karnataka Industrial Policy 2025-30. FILE PHOTO

2025, THE YEAR THAT WAS

'Beyond Bengaluru'

According to him, over 70% of these investments would go to "Beyond Bangalore" with north Karnataka capturing some 45%. The incentive structure, under the new Karnataka Industrial Policy, promoted investments beyond Bengaluru by offering capital subsidies of up to 30% and enhanced PLI (production linked incentive) support in these regions, Mr. Patil said.

Mr. Patil said, over and above GIM commitments, an additional investment of ₹30,000 crore came from electronics, aerospace, and manufacturing spaces.

However, he said, MoU conversion progress was still under way, adding, with 46% of GIM commitments converted and single-window applications filed. The manufacturing sector has been showing strong traction, with conversion levels at around 60%, the Minister said.

"Each investor has already been assigned a nodal officer to handhold them throughout the application process," he said. A recent meeting chaired by the Chief Minister reviewed approval processes and directed departments to shorten timelines, the Minister said.

FDI inflows

In addition to GIM investments, the foreign direct investment (FDI) flow to Karnataka stood at $6.63 billion, which is ₹50,000 crore. "Over the years, Karnataka has consistently featured as one of the top States in India for FDI," said the Minister.

Mr. Patil and his team visited Japan and Korea twice and received investments of ₹6,500 crore and another ₹5,000 crore, during the calendar year 2025. Mr. Patil led business exploratory delegations to at least 10 countries, including the U.S., U.K., Japan, Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and conducted at least 30 meetings with potential investors from diverse industry domains.

The State has an ambitious goal to attract ₹7.5 lakh crore in investments and create 20 lakh jobs by 2030 under the Karnataka Industrial Policy 2025-30.

In the calendar year 2026, a ministerial delegation will be visiting Germany (aerospace) and the U.K. (for other industries) again. In addition, the State would also have a strong presence at the World Economic Forum (WEF) scheduled to take place between January 19 and 23, 2026, at Davos, Switzerland.

Intent and action

Industry observers said that the key thing is to ensure that the intent is converted into action. Harish Bijoor, founder of Harish Bijoor Consults Inc., said, "The ultimate goal is to translate intent into action. We need to track this process with care. Plan, implement and evaluate." Murthy B.S., CEO, Leadership Capital, a CXO hiring firm and a people expert, said, "Today, investments go where talent goes. Across the entire sunrise sectors of tech, clean energy and EV ecosystem, Karnataka is the clear leader." The investments in 2025 would create thousands of new jobs in the State in next two years and more jobs in the years after that, Mr. Murthy estimated.

Wish list

- In 2025, Karnataka has attracted investment of ₹10.27 lakh crore, and 2026 and 2027 are expected to see these projects taking physical shape
- More industries are expected to go 'Beyond Bengaluru' for a more equitable growth of the State, particularly in the northern region
- The State has an ambitious goal to attract ₹7.5 lakh crore in investments and create 20 lakh jobs by 2030 under the Karnataka Industrial Policy 2025–30

Kacheguda to Yeshwantpur Vande Bharat to stop at Hindupur

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti V. Somanna on Saturday flagged off the Kacheguda-Yeshwantpur-Kacheguda Vande Bharat Express with an additional stoppage at Hindupur Railway Station.

Long-standing demand

Mr. Somanna said, "The newly approved halt at Hindupur was in response to a long-standing demand and would benefit a large number of commuters travelling between Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka."

Train No. 20703 (Kacheguda-Yeshwantpur) will arrive at Hindupur at 12.08 p.m. and depart at 12.10 p.m. In the return journey, Train No. 20704 (Yeshwantpur-Kacheguda) will halt at the station from 3.48 p.m. to 3.50 p.m.

Sanchara Yukta project may add 90 km of roads beyond GBA limits

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Beyond the planned 228-km road network under the Sanchara Yukta project in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits, the B-SMILE has identified the possibility of expanding the network by an additional 90 km, which would fall under the jurisdiction of the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA).

Under the project, the government plans to build roads along the buffer zones of storm-water drains (SWDs) and lakes in the city to address growing congestion by expanding the road network.

The B-SMILE has planned seven road networks under the project including between Koramangala and Sarjapur. The project will also revive the Wind Tunnel Road expansion plans, intended to decongest HAL Airport Road. It was shelved in 2022.

The project will cover a large road network in the East City Corporation, with a total length of 96.132 km. Notably, east Bengaluru currently has low road density, between 8 km and 10 km per sq. km, depending on the area. It also experiences high congestion due to a large floating population and a high concentration of workspaces.

The project will also build 59.94 km of roads in the North City Corporation, 36.91 km in the West, 20.8 km in the South, and 14.135 km in the Central zone. In total, 227.917 km of roads will be built in GBA limits at a cost of ₹199.4 crore. Works have already begun on ground to construct a road from Inner Ring Road in Koramangala to Sarjapur Road.

Beyond this, there is a prospect of developing an additional 90.179 km road network in the BDA area. According to a well-placed source in the B-SMILE, this possibility has been identified in the areas where there is rapid development and population growth. These regions could also be brought in the GBA limits in the future.

However, the project has attracted considerable backlash. *The Hindu* had earlier reported on the importance of buffer zones and their critical role in preventing flooding. Experts have warned that reducing buffer zones would harm micro-ecosystems and inevitably affect the health of lakes.

In addition, a GBA document on the project highlights that the recent notification reducing SWD buffer zones has compelled the implementing agency to engage more stakeholders. As a result, the B-SMILE will have to spend more on land acquisition.

Under the project, the B-SMILE will also take up the widening of the Wind Tunnel Road, though with a revised plan that involves realigning the road by altering its course.

The project is expected to significantly reduce traffic on HAL Airport Road and provide an alternative route to the Outer Ring Road (ORR) for residents of central and southeastern Bengaluru.

B.S. Prahallad, Technical Director, B-SMILE, told *The Hindu* that since HAL has expansion plans, the B-SMILE has opted to realign the road. "This will reduce the distance and also make the road wider," he said.

"The project will be a game changer for ORR and Bellandur commuters, as it becomes a viable alternative. A major advantage is that it will decongest HAL Airport Road, which is gradually seeing an increase in vehicular traffic," he added.

Planned stretches under Sanchara Yukta

- Koramangala Inner Ring Road to Sarjapur Road
- Hebbal Military area (Sarovara Layout) to Thanisandra Main Road
- Thanisandra Main Road to Hennur Main Road
- Kerekodi Road from V-Legacy Road to R.R. Nagar Arch
- Road from Nayandahalli Circle to V-Legacy Road
- Bellandur Waste Weir Road to Old Airport Road Virginia Mall
- Wind Tunnel Road

Sanchara Yukta road network

Bengaluru City Corporation	Road length (in km)
North	59.94
West	36.91
South	20.8
East	96.132
Central	14.135
BDA jurisdiction	90.179

GBA reviews e-khata issues; staff complaints after letter to Dy CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following a letter submitted by the Municipal Officers and Employees' Welfare Association to Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) convened a meeting to discuss the issues raised by the authority.

Tushar Giri Nath, Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department, and M. Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner of GBA, held discussions with association president A. Amruthraj and officials of the Revenue Department. In the letter sent to Mr. Shivakumar recently, Mr. Amruthraj alleged that Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), mentally harasses revenue officers and uses abusive language during the morning video conference.

Tushar Giri Nath

The association also flagged issues related to the e-khata system. The association pointed out to shortcomings in the e-khata software that have led to difficulties for employees. It suggested that if certain issues in the software are rectified, e-khata applications could be cleared immediately in a swift manner.

The GBA had submitted a proposal to the government seeking the suspension of Deputy Commissioner D.K. Babu and Revenue Officer Varalakshamma. The association requested that this proposal be withdrawn.

The Additional Chief Secretary assured the association that a meeting would be held with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to urgently rectify the deficiencies arising from the e-khata software.

Regarding the suspension proposal, Mr. Nath told the association that appropriate action would be initiated against the officials after subjecting them to a departmental inquiry.

On the complaints, Mr. Rao and Mr. Nath told the officials that the Special Commissioner may have used certain words to expedite the e-Aasthi process for the benefit of citizens. Both senior officials have also requested the Revenue Department officials to cooporate with the Special Commissioner in the interest of public.

Man slits wife's throat over job dispute

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 39-year-old woman was murdered allegedly by her husband following a heated argument over her employment at a massage parlour in north Bengaluru.

The deceased has been identified as Ayesha Siddiqui, 39. The accused, Syed Zabi, after allegedly killing his wife by slitting her throat with a knife, reportedly surrendered before the police.

Police said the incident took place at Agrahara Layout in the Sampigehalli police station limits. Ayesha was working at a massage parlour. The accused had reportedly been pressuring her to quit the job, leading to repeated arguments. The police have registered a case.

Woman dies after superstition-driven violence by in-laws in Kalaburagi

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

A 29-year-old woman was allegedly beaten to death by her in-laws after being accused of being possessed by an evil spirit, in a case of superstition-driven violence in Aland taluk of Kalaburagi district on Friday.

The deceased, Muktabai, a native of Aland town, was married to a man from Maharashtra. According to the police, she had reportedly collapsed at her residence a few days ago, allegedly due to health complications and high blood pressure.

Muktabai's parents alleged that instead of seeking medical assistance, her relatives, including her brother-in-law and mother-in-law, claimed she was possessed by evil spirits and subjected her to a violent ritual to "drive out the spirit".

She was allegedly assaulted with a wooden club, resulting in severe injuries.

Muktabai was later shifted to a hospital by her mother and sister, but she succumbed during treatment.

Her mother has accused the in-laws of taking her to Ganagapur village in Afzalpur taluk and assaulting her in the name of superstition rituals, leading to her death.

She sought action against all those involved in the crime.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

V R VAIDYANATHAN (82yrs), Retired Deputy Librarian, The Hindu, Chennai Passed away on 26-December - 2025. Address: Flat 1A, Block 10, Ceebros Park Apt, Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai, Valasaravakkam,Chennai - 600087. Contact: 98840 15134.

Govt of Karnataka
Office of the Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development, 9th Cross, KR Puram, Hassan-573201
E-mail: ddwcdhassan@gmail.com Phone No: 08172-267218, 235133 Fax No: 08172-268976

No/DDH/WCD/Notification/2025-26 Date:24.12.2025

Notification

In order to upgrade the Anganwadi centers to Saksham Anganwadi's, eligible tenderers have to be identified for the purchase of clean storage materials for 750 Anganwadi centers in the Hassan district. Therefore, for the purchase and supply of the said storage items, eligible bidders are invited tender through the e-Procurement Portal under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act-1999. The bidders can submit their bids online from 24.12.2025 to 07.01.2026 up to 5-00PM. For further information, The bidders can contact Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development, Hassan contacted during office hours. Or throurgh Website https://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development, Hassan

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/886/ಕೆಎಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, CHAMARAJANAGARA
email add: ka.chamarajanagara.cmc@gmail.com
website add : www.chamarajanagaracity.mrc.gov.in

No: CMC/CHN/TS/AEE/PR-51/2025-26 Date : 24-12-2025

-: ReTender Notification :-

(Through The Government of Karnataka Public Procurement Portal)

Under the AMRUT 2.0 Scheme a tender has been invited through the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal as per the **Karnataka Standard Tender Document - KW-3** (Karnataka Public Procurement Transparency Directions 1999-2000 Act 2000). Eligible tenderers can participate in the tender through the portal **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sl. No.	Work Details	Amount Put to Tender (Rs in Lakhs)	Amount of E.M.D. (Rs in Lakhs)
01	(DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT49074/CALL-3)	76.50	1.53

1. Last Date for Submission of Tender (Through e-portal Only): **15-01-2026 Upto 5.30 PM,** Date of opening of Technical bid Dated: **17-01-2026 after 11.00 AM**
2. Further details can be obtained from the website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and from the office of Municipal Commissioner, City Municipal Council, Chamarajanagar or Assistant Executive Engineer (Civil) City Municipal Council, Chamarajanagara.
3. Any amendments / addendums will be published on the portal only and the tenderers shall abide by all the conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Sd/- Prakash K.H.
Commissioner, CMC, Chamarajanagara

No. : DIPR:CHANAGAR:597:2025-26

Form No. 14
[Regulations 33(2)]
By Regd. A/D. Dasti failing which by Publication

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BENGALURU (DRT 1)

Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Financial Services
Debt Recovery Tribunal - I Karnataka (Bengaluru)
4th Floor, Telephone House, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru
Pin Code - 560 001.

DEMAND NOTICE

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961

RC / 27 / 2023 **16-10-2023**

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK
Versus
TECHNO FABS MR.

In the Matter of
(CH-1) - Punjab National Bank
Peenya Industrial Estate Branch
Acharaya College Building, 1st Cross, 1st Stage,
Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru - 560 053.
... Applicant Bank / Certificate Holder

--- Versus ---

To,
(CD-1) M/s. Techno Fabs, Represented by Its Proprietor
Sri. K.S. Umesh Babu S/o. Sri. K.S. Srinivas Rao,
Peenya 1st Stage, Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru - 560 058.
Also At : No. 914, 1st Floor, 3rd Main, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru - 560 040.
(CD-2) Sri. K.S. Ashwathanarayana
No. 572, "SHIVAM", 2nd Cross, NGEF Layout,
Nrupathunganagar, Nagarabhavi, Bengaluru - 560 072.

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the **Presiding Officer, Debts Recovery Tribunal, Bengaluru (DRT-1) in OA/254/2019** an amount of **Rs. 34179048 (Rupees Three Crore Forty One Lakhs Seventy Nine Thousands Forty Eight Only)** along with pendentillite and future interest **@ 14.50%** Compound Interest Monthly **w.e.f. 15-02-2019** till realization and cost of **Rs. 182305 (Rupees One Lakh Eighty Two Thousands Three Hundred Five Only)** has become due against you (Jointly and Severally / Fully / Limited)

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.

3. You hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing.

4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on **05-12-2023 at 10.30 a.m.** for further proceedings.

5. In addition to the sum of aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay :

(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.

(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date **16th October 2023.**

Sd/- (Sanjiv Kumar)
Recovery Officer - I
Debts Recovery Tribunal - 1 Bengaluru

The future is female: Women cadets from the National Defence Academy (NDA) share a light moment with their professors after the Passing Out Parade marking the culmination of the 148th course training at Khetrapal Parade Ground in Pune on May 30. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Vying for a view: Fans during the IPL victory celebration of the Royal Challengers Bengaluru on June 4, when a stampede led to the death of 11 persons. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Nature's fury: Flood-like situation in area affected by a cloudburst, at a village in Chamoli, Uttarakhand on July 8. PTI

Crowd surge: Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president and actor Vijay at a gathering in Karur on September 28, when a stampede led to the death of over 40 people. M. MOORTHY

Storm scars: A view of houses battered by high tidal waves under the impact of Cyclone Montha at Jaggaraju colony in Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, on October 28. K.R DEEPAK

Twisted metal: At least 20 died in a collision between a Telangana State public transport bus and a gravel-laden tipper lorry near Chevella in Rangareddy district on November 3. NAGARA GOPAL

Alert zone: Security personnel seen at the blast site near Red Fort in New Delhi on November 10. At least 14 were killed in the incident which left several injured. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Grey choke: A pole-mounted mist spray system operates to mitigate pollution as air quality remains 'very poor' in Delhi on a December morning. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

CMYK

S BG-BGE

Several fish and pelicans found dead at Harohalli lake

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A dead pelican at Harohalli lake in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Several fish and spot-billed pelicans were found dead at Harohalli Lake in the northern part of the city between December 24 and 26, causing alarm among nearby residents, who suspect that pollutants may have entered the water body.

However, officials of the North City Corporation and limnologists suggested that the deaths could be due to a drop in temperature in the city.

V. Ramprasad of Friends of Lakes pointed out that a similar incident occurred at a lake on the outskirts of Bengaluru about a month ago, where both pelicans and fish were found dead. He said the deaths could also be the result of a viral infection and stressed that the development should not be ignored.

The officials too have not ruled out the possibility of the fish kill being linked to the pelicans.

Bindu, a nearby resident and regular walker, said she spotted three dead fish on Friday. However, G. Selvarajan, chairman of Green Circle, told *The Hindu* that 12 dead fish were found on December 25.

"All the fish were found dead along the edges of the lake, and there may be more in the middle. We also spotted two dead pelicans, which raises suspicion about the discharge of untreated sewage and pollutants," he said, adding that several apartment complexes have come up in the neighbourhood.

North City Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar told *The Hindu* that officials had inspected the site. "It could be temperature-related, but we will look into it and conduct tests to ascertain the cause," Mr. Kumar said. Shivakumar Magada, limnologist and professor of aquatic biology at the College of Fisheries, Mangaluru, explained that fish deaths in waterbodies are common during the onset of monsoon and summer. However, in this case, he said it could be due to a significant drop in temperature.

Notably, the Bengaluru KIAL observatory recorded a temperature of 13.6 degrees Celsius on December 22, followed by 14 degrees Celsius on December 23 and 24. The corporation Commissioner echoed Mr. Magada's observations. "I have received similar complaints regarding pelican deaths from Residents' Welfare Associations. We will look into the issue," he said.

Demolition at Kogilu: DKS counters Pinarayi's 'bulldozer raj' charge

Kerala CM's statement came after civic authorities demolished over 150 houses on Dec. 20, leaving 500 people homeless

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A file photo of the demolition site at Kogilu in Bengaluru.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday hit back at Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan for criticising the demolition drive in Kogilu Layout in Bengaluru, terming the remarks as "unnecessary interference" made without understanding the facts. He described the comment as a "gimmick in view of upcoming Kerala elections".

Responding to Mr. Vijayan's statement that the demolition of houses in Faqir Colony and parts of Waseem Layout reflected the normalisation of "bulldozer raj", Mr. Shivakumar said the land cleared by government agencies was an encroached solid waste dumping site and posed health hazards to residents in the area.

Mr. Vijayan's statement followed the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), along with the police, demolishing over 150 houses in Kogilu Layout, Yelahanka, on December 20, leaving nearly 500 people homeless. Since then, the affected families have been living near the demolished site without any accommodation. All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary K.C. Venugopal is learnt to have sought a report from Mr. Shivakumar on the demolition of houses in the city.

The land cleared by govt. agencies was an encroached solid waste dumping site, says Shivakumar

Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivanagar residence, Mr. Shivakumar said, "It is unfortunate that a senior leader like Mr. Vijayan has commented on this without knowing the facts. The land was a solid waste pit, and there are many health related problems there. We also have humanity, and we gave the occupants an opportunity to move to other places."

Opposing the allegation of "bulldozer culture", Mr. Shivakumar said the State government was only protecting government land in the heart of the city. "We don't have a bulldozer culture. I appeal to him not to talk like that. The land mafia often creates slums to later encroach upon land, and we will not allow that," he said.

He asserted that the issue had nothing to do with minorities and reiterated that the genuine beneficiaries would be provided housing elsewhere. "If there are eligible people, we are ready to provide houses under the Rajiv Gandhi housing scheme. Our government has built lakhs of houses for the poor," he added.

"Whoever lives in Karnataka with valid documents will be provided necessary support. We have instructed officials to give out clear instructions regarding this," Mr. Shivakumar said. Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Priyank Kharge said Mr. Vijayan was indulging in vote bank politics and questioned the silence on the lynching of a Dalit person in Kerala.

The demolition drive was taken as per the law, he said.

All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary K.C. Venugopal said in a post on X that he had spoken to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar in this regard.

"Conveyed the AICC's serious concern that such actions should have been undertaken with far greater caution, sensitivity, and compassion, keeping the human impact at the centre," he said, adding that both had agreed to address it.

Minister for Labour Santosh Lad said Mr. Vijayan had spoken keeping in mind minority votes, as the State would go to elections next year.

3 arrested for harassing woman scooterist

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Suddguntepalya police on Saturday arrested three youths for harassing a motorcycle-borne woman in BTM Layout on Thursday.

The incident occurred at midnight on December 25 when the woman was riding her scooter alone. A passer-by noticed the act and recorded it on his mobile phone which went viral on social media. As per the report which was tagged to the city police online account, the accused riding on a motorcycle, without helmets, followed the woman for nearly two km, riding recklessly and attempting to intimidate her. A motorist driving behind recorded the incident on video and shared it on social media, tagging the Bengaluru Traffic Police. The police identified the accused as Roshan, 19, Ayan, 19, and Rihan Khan, 18.

Drunk private bus driver caught during night check

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Days after a Sea Bird company bus was involved in a fatal road accident that claimed over six lives, the Upparpet traffic police on Friday intercepted another driver of the same company minutes before he began a scheduled trip to Goa from Gandhi Nagar in Bengaluru. The incident occurred when the driver, identified as Diwakara, was driving a Bengaluru-Goa night service bus. During routine inspection, the police stopped the bus and subjected the driver to a breathalyser test, which confirmed that he was intoxicated. The police said the driver was operating a sleeper private bus despite being under the influence of alcohol, raising serious concerns over passenger safety during night travel. The incident has highlighted the risks associated with drunk-driving, especially in long-distance night bus services. The driver was taken into police custody. The bus was stopped on the spot, and arrangements were made for another driver to continue the journey, ensuring the safety of passengers. The bus was carrying around 30 passengers. The police have registered a case

FIR against undertrial for creating ruckus

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Parappana Agrahara police on Thursday registered a case against a 33-year-old undertrial prisoner for creating ruckus and threatening the Superintendent of Prisons and his team during inspections.

Based on the complaint filed by Paramesh H.A., the police booked the prisoner. According to the complaint, the prison team, as part of surprise inspection, went to the prison hospital section where the accused Lokonab Lodja Emmanuel was housed.

The accused initially came forward and handed over the mobile phone with a SIM to the team and later started creating ruckus when the officials started to frisk him.

The accused, according to officials, was a habitual offender. Earlier the prison officials, during separate inspections, found six mobile phones concealed in the sewage pipe, under the bed, and inside the dust bin of the rooms in barrack 9 and 1 of the tower 1 sections.

Timings
BENGALURU

SUNDAY, DEC. 28	
RISE	06:40
SET	18:02
RISE	12:29
SET	00:16
MONDAY, DEC. 29	
RISE	06:40
SET	18:03
RISE	13:12
SET	01:10
TUESDAY, DEC. 30	
RISE	06:41
SET	18:03
RISE	13:59
SET	02:07

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	20
Mysuru	28	13
Bengaluru	27	16

Bengaluru Today
26°C The weather will be dry.Day will be comfortable. Night will be very cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C Morning will be very cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be very cool. Dry weather to occur.

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APPOINTMENT

KALASALINGAM
MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL
A unit of Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Anand Nagar, Krishnankoil - 626 126, Virudhunagar (Dt.), Tamil Nadu

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Applications invited for the following posts
Dean/ MS/ Professors/ Associate Professors
Assistant Professors / Senior & Junior Residents / Tutors

- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Biochemistry
- Pharmacology
- Pathology
- Microbiology
- Community Medicine
- Psychiatry
- Ophthalmology
- Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Anesthesiology
- Radio Diagnosis
- Emergency Medicine
- Radiology
- Forensic Medicine
- General Medicine
- General Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Dermatology
- Orthopedics
- ENT & Dentistry

HIGHLIGHTS
450-bed multi-speciality hospital
Quarters facility available on campus | CBSE school on campus

Qualification & Experience as per NMC norms
Nursing Superintendent / Nursing Supervisors / Staff Nurses / ICU Technicians / Non clinical OT Technicians / MRD Technicians / Optometrist / Radiographers - Bio medical Engg. / Audiologist / Pharmacist / Rural & Urban Medical Officer / Medical Record Officer Manager / Administrative Officer / PRO / Sr. & Jr. Assistants / Chief Librarian / Asst. Librarian / Library Assistant / Office Assistant

E mail updated resume within 10 days to: recruitment@klu.ac.in
Contact : 73977 60759
-Registrar

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- Minimizes chance of stroke
- A great stress reliever - makes you see the brighter side of life.

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Department of Commerce
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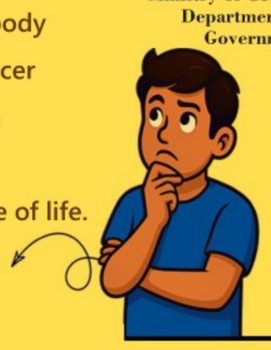

Steps to Brewing Happiness

- Boil water in a vessel
- Add 3 grams of branded tea of your choice
- Place a lid on the vessel, let it brew for 2-3 minutes
- Add milk and sugar to taste

Pure Tea, Pure Vibes, Better Health

Quality Matters - Keep off Adulterated tea

- If a pinch of tea powder turns cold water red, that's adulterated tea
- Authentic tea when added to cold water will not dramatically turn it red
- Hence, always opt for branded tea that is quality assured, and not loose tea sold unpacked
- Buying authentic, branded tea is also a great support to tea farmers, and a big barrier against adulteration

Scan this to know more

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Executive Director,
Tea Board India, Zonal Office,
Shelwood, Club Road, Coonoor - 643101.
Contact : 0423 2230 316
Email : ed.coonoor-tbi@gov.in

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Classifieds

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LIFE MADE SIMPLE

THE HINDU

Matrimonial

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED
BRIDES WANTED
BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED
Classification Common for Brides, Bridegrooms, Brides & Grooms
ASSAMESE
AWADHI
BENGALI
BHOJPURI
BIHARI
CHHATTISGARHI
ENGLISH
GUJARATI
HARYANI
HINDI
KANNADA
KASHMIRI
KONKANI
MALAYALAM
MANIPURI
MARATHI
MARWARI
NEPALI
ORIYA
PARSI
PUNJABI
SAURASHTRA
SINDHI
TAMIL
TELUGU
TULU
URDU
ADVOCATE
BUSINESS
DEFENCE
DOCTOR
ENGINEER
FINANCE/ BANKING
GOVERNMENT/ QUASI-GOVERNMENT
IAS/ ALLIED SERVICES
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
MBA/ CA/ ICWA
NRI
COSMOPOLITAN
DIVORCEE
PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED
MARRIAGE BUREAUS
WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

COMPUTER / INFO.TECH

✔ **NEED UNMARRIED,** any language Brahmin Boy–employed in India/USA/ Abroad. Ph: 9791111321 for BRAHMIN GIRL 1984/BTech/Employed

COSMOPOLITAN

PILLAI/MUDALIYAR GROOM wanted for bride 31yrs 5'6" architect from well to do family 9962406688

29, HINDU, IITM. HSEE Post graduate, Entrepreneur, well settled, earning min 36 lac p.a, seeks well educated, Broad minded/outlook, independent, career–oriented bride (doctor/dentist/CA/architect/self–employed professional) to settle in Coimbatore. Caste no bar. CT: 8056145620

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COSMOPOLITAN

ATTRACTIVE, TALENTED 35, well–educated professional (LSR; UK Master's). Seeks compatible groom. Religion/caste no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

DIVORCEE

MUSLIM female Good looking, 42, no kids, Govt Group–A officer, own house, well settled in Chennai, seeks kind, respectable, good looking Muslim groom, age 42–50, divorcee/widower, with/without kids, Govt officer/Bank official/Professional, settled in Chennai. Lang no bar. Call/WA: 9042310136

BEAUTIFUL, SINCERE 29, well–educated professional (MNC). Loving, cultured family. Seeks compatible groom. Caste no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

DOCTOR

CHRISTIAN DOCTOR M.D. Christ Centered Good looking 36 years working girl Seeks proposals from god fearing Doctors, Engineers, Professionals 9444777290 / 8095119222

HINDU NADAR, 25, MBBS MD, 165, v fair, Hospital owner, seeks PG Doctor Multi millionaire family. Contact : 9940119844

MBBS DOCTOR girl 30/155 doing PG from Kerala seeks alliance from Doctors, Engineers of well educated and broad minded family. Caste No Bar. 9400962384.

M.S. SURGEON 28, BC Tall Fair Good Looking Seeks Suitable Doctors from Well Educated Broadminded Background.Caste no bar. Contact. 7200365364

Fair, Cultured, Good Looking, Slim, Doctor Girl 36/165 MD, Cardiac Anesthesiologist, Chennai based doctor family Father Keralite Nair Mother from Tamilnadu. Looking for Doctor groom or Engineer from respectable family.
98400 50381 / 98409 85383

DKV 29 Years Lady Radiologist, Divorced Well settled family in Chennai. Caste no bar. Phone: 8668118358

MD General Medicine Doctor girl working in Chennai 32/156seeks suitable alliance 9447493034 /9497168001

FINANCE / BANKING

SC, AD, Bank Employee, Age: 32, Triupathi. Wanted Bank Employee or Government Employee. Ct: 90001 80420

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

Intercaste Parents seek suitable Alliance for their Daughter D/B 25-3-95, 165 cm, IPS Officer Odisha Cadre from Parents of Civil Service Officers, Doctors, Judicial Officers or any other Group A Officers. Contact: 9447186098 & 9747823111.

MALAYALAM

EZHAVA, ADVOCATE and partner of a legal firm, aged 26 years, Pooradam slight Papam, ht. 167 cm, belongs to a educated Ezhava family, parents professionals. Legal background also preferred. Ph: 9946226326, 9497071326.

HINDU-VISWAKARMA PARENTS seeks suitable alliance for daughter, 27 yrs, MBBS, pursuing MD, height 157 cms, well-cultured and family-oriented, seeking PG Doctors/ Engineers/ Other Professionals Hindu grooms of age group 27-32. Caste No Bar. Never married. Alliance from respectable families preferred. Contact: ptsukumar@gmail.com.

HINDU NAIR girl (1/3/2002, 5:15 am, Uthram), Trivandrum, Kerala, studying MBA at Melbourne, Australia and also working in logistics company. Preferring NRI's Also without horoscope. Ph: 9526364446.

NAIR GIRL,92BORN,MBBS,ATHAM,CHENNAI settled,kindly watsapp profile 9042526302

PROPOSALS INVITED for my daughter, Anisha – Malayali Thiyya – Masters – Statistics – age 25, family in Tirupur – working in Bangalore, Star – Bharani – from well educated Thiyya boys contact Krishnakumar +91 97468 89952 with horoscope details or email: unhari@yahoo.com

EZHAVA GIRL 31, MS, Gynec (Govt. College) 28.10.1994, fair, upper middle class, proposals from Doctors / Professionals. Ph: 8281425422.

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED CSI Nadar, 28yrs, MBBS, MS, well educated family, Contact: 9380791999/ 9841329471

36/154CMS CHRISTAN girl Born Again SC AD/ M.Ed/ Working in Chennai 25Kpm/ Own house seeks suitable groom below 40 yrs. Ct: 7339432540

CHRISTIAN CSI 42, Divorce seeks working professional, God fearing Christian–educated family. 8939896578

TAMIL

BANGALORE BASED CSI Christian Nadar girl from upper middle class family – fair, slim, 5ft 6inches, divorced, 41, no kids. BE, MBA. Working with MNC, earning over 40 LPA. Seeking professionally qualified, god fearing Christian groom, below 45, no kids, from established family. Caste, language no bar. Contact mother on +918296019442/ mozartscadence@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN, PILLAI, 36,M.Sc.,M Phil., Asst.Prof. Pondy,Seeks Groom FC/BC, below 39 yrs. Ct: 98946-77892.

CANADIAN CITIZEN Christian Bride 29 yrs, 159cm, is looking for God Fearing, Family Oriented, Canadian or American Citizen. Age 30–35, Professional, have Biblical values and Faith. Email Profile and Photo to rvjplanning@gmail.com 9677181606

40/163CMS CHRISTIAN girl Born Again Christian SC AD/ M.B.A/ Not working/ Own house seeks suitable groom below 45 yrs. Ct: 7339432540

CHRISTIAN, 29, ME, 50 lakhs, VIP, 8137003549

CSI NADAR 29/178cm USA MS Seeks CSI Nadar Groom from USA 9944885050.

CHRISTIAN MUDALIAR 25/165 Beautiful, BE,SWE, INTEL, 2000000.PA, Affluent, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

CHRISTIAN, 36, MBA, rich & affluent. 8137003550

CHRISTIAN, 24, BSc, rich & affluent. 8138900470

BORN AGAIN Christian, 44yrs/152, MBBS, MD doctor, seeks christian groom, Chennai. CT – 9500188067

Mudhaliar Remarriage 30 Bcom MBA 4yrs Girl baby Chennai Seeks Chennai Groom CNB Geetham 98848 58014

HINDU SAURASHTRA Swathi Natchathiram 24/162 fair PG girl Upper middle class family seeks fair age 26-28, well employed groom in IT/Business from well settled family 9677770072

WELL EDUCATED, 36 , Seeks Compatible Groom. Caste No Bar. Call / WA 94896 95984.

MUDHALIAR 31 162cm BTech Abudhabi working in MNC seeking High Abroad Profiles CNB Geetham 9884858014

Hindu Fair 43/154, MSc Divorcee seeks well settled Groom below 52 CNB Phone/ Whatsapp 9791881860

SEEKING NEVER Married Tamil/Telugu Groom age (43–44)working in Chennai/US for Naidu Bride–SWE. Yamini.hari@gmail.com/ 9445270312/ 9962805093

RICH MUDALIYAR, 31yrs B.Tech,MBA, Industrial background in Chennai, Seeks Suitable Groom Cont: 6385293227

VANIYA CHETTIAR, 46/157, Rohini, M.Sc., TNGFS Department Officer. seeks equally Qualified Employed Groom. Contact: 94452 07116

HINDU, 33, castenobar, NRI, BE, 10 crores, 7356483111

Hindu, 30, pillai, B.tech, 10 crores, 8137003550

HINDU, 28, caste nobar, ME, 50 lakhs, 9072777822

HINDU, 28, Mudaliyar, BE, 20crores, 8138009235, VIP

YADHAVA/1990 BORN/ Govt Job / PSU–Health Care / 8.00 LPA/Veg/Caste no bar in BC or OBC. CT:9597459651 or 9443985816.

HINDU, 28, widow, B.L, caste no bar, 7356483111

HINDU, 29, caste no bar, ME, 40 lakhs. 8138900537

HINDU SOURASHTRA Girl of Anusham, Viruchigam, Cleared MRCS Currently Surgical Registrar @ NHS, UK of 29/ 163cm /64 kg, Fair & Slim Needs Groom Working/Settled in UK. 9486869995

SEEKING ABROAD Grooms Only For 48yrs. Divorcee With No Issues Dr. Tamil, Hindu. CNB. Contact: 9790124427

MUDALIAR 24/ V.Fair, BE, MS, Father Business, Chennai, Elite Family, seeks groom Business/Eng–8925019776

Groom wanted
Convent Educated Vanniya Kula Kshatriya, 24 yrs, Bride, B.Com, LLM, LLB, Hons, Reputed very well to do business family seek, AIS officer TN cadre, Group1, Doctor, Lawyer Cosmopolitan Groom.
WhatsApp/call-Dad: 9962331777

TAMIL

AFFLUENT HINDU business family from Bangalore seeks suitable match for their daughter (1989 born), good-looking, working in Paris with a French bank. Seeking well-educated, handsome South Indian groom, well-mannered with good values. WhatsApp: 98454 89161/ Email: vyjayanthimala1960@gmail.com

GROOM WANTED Mudaliyar, CNB, 26yrs, BE, MBA, Seeking Elite business Groom only Contact 6385293227

BRIDE GROOM WANTED
Tamil Maruthuvar, BBA, LLB(Hons), 24 years, 155cm, Very Fair, Good Looking, Working in Corporate, Parents State Government Officers,
Looking for well Qualified Professionals with Good Family Background, Same Caste Contact with Horoscope, Photo/Profile
WhatsApp only: 9841262160

MUDALIAR (CNB) 26/ V.Fair, B.E, MS, MNC, Sr.Analyst, Chennai, Decent pay, well settled family, seeks groom India / Abroad – 9962530015

BRIDES WANTED

BENGALI

Bengali Boy 27 Years / LPA 21 seeks Educated Smart Bong Girl (M) Contact - 9839187701.

COSMOPOLITAN

BANGALORE BASED unmarried Kannada Smartha brahmin boy DOB Mar 1979. BE working MNC as senior HR exec with 1 Cr annual salary seeks educated Hindu upper caste single girl below 43 willing to settle in Bangalore. contact 9980206008

DM– DOCTOR (Tamil, Dec91, 185 cm, Kongu Vellalar, Hastham, affluent) , wkg in Bangalore, seeks a tall, v.fair, virtuous PG Doctor / non medico bride.(28–31 years) Any language / FC–BC castes. Parents:93425–29547 / 9072118800

Arya Vysya, Caste no bar. 30, 178, Software 45 LPA, well-settled Seeking a middle-class girl. Ph: 8555072557.

DOCTOR

HINDU MUDALAIYAR, Hastham, 27/ 173 MD Pulmonologist working in reputed hospital Chennai, affluent doctor family. Ct: 9962621469/ 9840021469

MARATHI

SUITABLE MATCH for Marathi Vegetarian Brahmin boy Age 31,170 cm,MS IIT Madras, Job MNC Bengaluru 35 LPA, No any addiction, All Brahmin accepted Call 8305505090 , 7067203040

NRI

SMART, MATURE 27, 178cm, ambitious EU–based professional (double Master's). Affluent Christian family. Seeks compatible bride. Community/ language no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

TAMIL HINDU 55 yrs, 173cm BSc, MBA, IT Proff, Australia, Divorce. Seeks Bride, WhatsApp: +61422909407

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN 39 years engineer working in MNC+BUSINESS well settled at chennai wanted a graduate girl from a decent Christian family–cont 9884825317

CHRISTIAN NADAR 1st Marriage 53/ 174 MPhil GovtOficer 30L & 52/170 PhD Prof House@Chennai. Seek upto 45 FC/BC Educate Professional 9444032498

TAMIL

HINDU–BE/SWE/172/34/25LPA/AYILLAM–KATAGAM .SETTLED in Bangalore, educated and financially stable. Seeking Bride from educated and decent family. Con 9845401461.

GAVARA/BALIJA NAIDU, 26yrs, 173 cm, slim, fair, B.Tech, Simma Rasi–Uthiram. Software–employed and in family business; income 30L p.a. Affluent export–import Business, Chennai. Seeking well–educated, good–looking bride. Ct: 79048 43 429

NADAR, 37 / 14.4 lakhs pa. Divorcee, no kids, M.E.Phd. Proff. Engg College, Chennai. seeks suitable bride. caste, religion no bar. Ct: 94432 69548

CNB NAIDU BDS MBA (UK) 1981, working as CEO in Blr Hospital with good assets seeks any PG Bride Dr./Engr/ IT/ Nurse from good Family. V.J.Naidu 9886782390/ 9962246305.

HINDU NADAR, 34yrs/180cm, Kettai, Viruchigam, Diploma, Jewellery shop Tuticorin seeks graduated Bride. Ct: 9791951823

MUDALIYAR 36Y BE/LLB 170cm, 14 Lacs, well and settled family little vitiligo seeks bride. Ct: 94452 42964

NAIDU (GAVARA), 34, BE., Sadhayam Kumbam, Working in Pvt.Bank, Coimbatore, Rs.9/LPA, Native: Srivilliputhur, Subsect No Bar, seeks suitable Bride. Ct: 99401 86888, 98403 80503

Mudaliar 30, BE MBA 177cm 28Lacs PA smart look well settled family seeks Bride CNB.8778514465 /7200866346

PARENTS INVITE suitably qualified, 26-28 yrs, family loving Tamil Hindu brides, for Pune based Tamil groom, 31 yrs, Prof in Pharmacy and Research Scholar with own houses. Contact Mr. Sukumar N. 9422028059

MUDALIAR/PILLAI DIVORCEE (No Kids) BE MBA 32/163 Group 1 Officer working in Coimbatore, Preferably from same community seeking Graduate Girl Divorcee/First Marriage. CT: 94868 53954.

TAMIL 45 B.E 9994351766 Carleton Nadar https://ingeniousdesigntech.com IISc https://tamilfilmmakerspro.com

SOZHIYA VELLALAR Pillai, 35, BE (CSE), Software Engineer from Coimbatore, seeks a bride aged 28–33 with a graduate qualification. All stars welcome except Aswini, Magham, Ayilyam, Kettai, and Moolam. Any Hindu community. Contact: +91–9940649141

1984 BORN, MCA, Coimbatore Settled, Garments Export Business, Looking for House Wife/Home Maker to be in a Joint Family. Education/ Wealth not Important.Matrimony Agents Excuse, Ct 9489603438

WELL Settled Tamil based Intercaste (SC+Brahmin) Dr Couple, looking for suitable Bride for their Son 32 Yrs (Ragu-Kethu) Dr MD Pathology KMCH, Cbe. Mob: 9842221324, 9894186469.

BRIDE WANTED Hindu Nadar, 28yrs, BE,M.sc (UK), 5lakhs pm, Elite business family Ct:9841329471/ 9380791999

SC (AD), 30yrs, B.Tech, Very Well Educated Family in Chennai, Seeks Suitable Bride Contact: 9176491777

CHENNAI, MUDLR Ph.D, Tetolr, Divorced, 42Yrs,GM Chess Govt 2Lac/ Mth.Educ simple Any Cast,Girl 9884171419

HINDU, VANNIYAR, 36, BCA, MBA, Ht –5.5, Wheatish Color, HR (Asst Manager) in IT, Sal: 1.5L PM 8148017757

TAMIL

BRIDE WANTED Tamil Beri Chettiar 32,BE, MS working Infosys seeks girl from Chettiar Chennai Ct 9566163405

TAMIL JAIN 32/ 185 Pooradam/ B.E/ Business, settled in Chennai seeks suitable Bride from same community or Pure Veg Family. Ct:97890 90793

MUDALIAR, BE, MTECH 28/168cm working in software - Chennai good looking seeks working bride. Ct: 9444701999 / 9841816265

HINDU, 37, caste no bar, NRI, 30 crores, 8138900470.

HINDU, divorced, USA, CPA 30 crores, 9072777811

✔ **MARAVAR 42** BE MNC 20L Young Looking Bachelor Lean Physique Clean habits Seeks suitable Vegetarian bride with lean Physique 9841958995

MUDALIYAR HINDU Tamil boy MBA IIT (M), 31/175 Power Finance Corporation (C.Govt), Delhi 24L/pa seeks qualified tamil bride. Caste no bar. 9444672110/ mohanbharathi100@gmail.com

HINDU NAIDU, 2nd Marriage, Age: 45, BBA, IT, 8 Lacs P.A, seeks suitable Bride, Divorcee or Widow without Children. Caste No Bar. 9840976778

37YR BOY, Punartham Sudha Jathakam, AutomobileEng. Trivandrum. 9895898812

HINDU, 28, caste no bar, fair & handsome, UK, VVIP. 8138900412

SEEKING BRIDE for our son 35y/ 173cm, MTech(IIT), MS(US), working in US. Hindu Tamil, Girl in India only. Parents Thevar and Iyengar, Caste No Bar. 9600865587, sivampankajam@gmail.com

MUDALIAR 32/168 Kettai BE Mech, MBA, Coimbatore CT: 95977-72439, 84892-72439.

DKV 2nd Marriage 53 / 3.5 LPM Sr. GM B'lore Seeks Issueless Girl CNB 9442607143.

BRIDE WANTED: For 33–yr–old groom, Piramalai Kallar, employed at Nokia, Bangalore, Income Rs.1.20 Lakhs pm., well–settled family, alliance from any Mukkulathor is welcome. Earlier marriage legally declared null & void. Contact with details: +91 98845 10516.

TAMIL YADAVA Boy, MBA, 37, Ayilyam,,TCS, Chennai seeks yadava bride within TN., Sozhia Vellalar, Mudaliyar bride considerable., Contact through Tamil. 9965673354, 7373386474.

AGE 56, Good body structure, Well settled Looking for a very beautiful & comfortable bride over 50 Years old. Email : dharanr2006@gmail.com

VADAKALAI - HARITA Gothram, Mithunam, Thiruvathirai (Sep.1998), Height 170 cms, B.E., I.T., Professional, Chennai. Seeks employed bride. Contact sundara1969@gmail.com Mobile - 99526 34577, 80729 60464.

HINDU IYER, Kanva Gothram, 1975, Revathi, Teetotaler, unmarried businessman from Kanniyakumari Dist. seeks Iyer/Iyengar Bride from Tamil Nadu or Kerala. Good Looking Graduate-Unmarried or Divorcee (without issues) acceptable. Ct: 98428 22128.

TAMIL

Seeking BRIDE for Bridegroom
Hindu, Kulalar/Udayaar, 44 yrs, 170 cms, M.Tech, IT professional, Caste open for discussion. First Marriage Only
CT: 93842 76066

BRIDE WANTED
Vadakalai Iyengar - Bharadwaja - Swathi - Thula; Sep' 1995 – Normal Complexion - 172 cm; PG in AI&ML from BITS & BE (ECE) – Working as Lead Data Analyst in MNC, Bangalore; Seeking a Bride who is working in Bangalore or willing to relocate.
+91-94814-06236
+91-97316-33361
krishrang1962@gmail.com

HINDU SC-AD 30/169 B.E., MBA well placed boy from well settled family seeks suitable bride. Caste no bar. Contact 9448664461

Brahmin Boy Vadamal 29 years 183cm well Educated working in MNC @ Chennai Drawing 1.50 Lakh P/M looking graduate Bride from a decent family of any Brahmin group Sub Sect No bar. Ct: 9940037800 / 9840861130

Viswakarma 33/170cm, BE (EEE) Sr. Engg working in Ashok Leyland Macroline Control Chennai, Earning 4.2L / PA, seeks well Educated good Looking Bride. Star : Sathayam, Rasi: Kumbam. Contact: 98400 39922.

TELUGU

CHRISTIAN NAIDU 30/185 Handsome, B.Tech, MBA–IIM,SWE, Microsoft, 5000000 PA, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

BRIDE WANTED Rich Naidu, 29yrs, B.Tech, MBA, Divorce, No issues, Elite Industrial background in Chennai. Contact: 63852 93227

PANTA REDDY, 46/170 B.Tech, 10LPA, Unmarried, Educated, well settled family chennai. Seeks Reddy / Naidu Bride, Sub–Caste No Bar. 9940360491

BTECH (ECE), Gavara, Age 24, Data Analyst in Wells Fargo, Hyderabad, 11 Lakhs per Annum, Chennai working girls Preferred Contact : Ashok 8939835453, mail ashoksfl72@gmail.com

BALIJA NAIDU Boy Handsome/30yrs M.S(Aus.) Settled in Chennai Elite Family Seeks good looking Bride only from Elite background Ct: 7299044330

URDU

35 YRS divorcee working in Dubai based company from a dakhni muslim family in Trichy looking for an educated girl (unmarried / divorcee Issueless) Contact : 9841060600.

SMU 28/175cm BE MBA working in MNC Chennai family seeks Pious Muslimah professionally qualified bride from respectable family. 9884624899.

MARRIAGE BUREAU

US UK Europe All Caste Religion 1st Marriage Remarriage. Ct:8248757840

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ELITE BRIDES WANTED

DEVAR, 32, 178 cms, MBA, Businessman. Lives in Hyderabad. Family is financially well off and lives in Coimbatore. Looking for a like minded match from similar community from Chennai and Coimbatore. Contact: 6366448344

VANNIA KULA KSHATRIYA, 26, 178 cms, M.Sc, Businessman. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded and well educated match in Tamil Nadu from similar caste. Contact: 6366448344

CHETTIAR, 27, 178 cms, MS, Working in Banking sector. Lives in USA. Family is financially well off. Looking for an amiable match from similar caste. Contact: 6366448343

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

REDDY, 24, 165 cms, BBA LLB, Working Professional. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Working Professional. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from well settled background match & similar caste. Contact: 6366448344

REDDY, 38, 160 cms, MBA, Businessman. Lives in Canada. Father is a Working Professional. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from similar community in US or Canada. Contact: 6366448344

MUDALIYAR, 32, 160 cms, MS. Lives in USA. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from similar caste from India/USA. Contact: 6366448343

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TAMIL

GROOM WANTED
Pillai / Isaivellalar, 27/167 cm, MBBS doing MD from well settled family seeks professionally qualified groom from Chennai. Doctors (MD and above)
CASTE NO BAR
Ct: 9443255479

BRIDEGROOM WANTED
Seeks Bridegroom (unmarried), 1984-1989 born, Educated, Good looking Groom (Reputed Business in Tamilnadu) for Hindu Tamil Chettiar traditional girl(unmarried), 1989 born Hastham Kanni Rasi, daughter of reputed Jewellery business family in Tamilnadu. Suitable alliance can send details along with horoscope
WA: 94421 10063

TELUGU

✔ **LOOKING FOR Groom, US citizen, Hyderabad Telugu 34/176cm, wheatish, MBA, Data Sci PhD, govt job, divorced, SC, well settled. Seeking well educational, settled boy. Caste no bar. Global Matches. Ct: 92475 04919.**

Caste No Bar 30 Years ,160 cm MD Doctor Bride Settled Family. Suitable Groom Doctor or S.W.E. 9573121555

Balija Naidu 35Y/165cm PhD Scholar, Academic Trainer and Mentor in Chennai seeks suitably qualified groom born between 1987 to mid 1990 within India only. Ph: 97909 08109

NAIDU GIRL 29/165cm , Aswini pursuing PhD doctoral studies in Satellite Communications Neuromorphic computing European space agency - Europe seeking suitable groom PhD / MS in USA. Ct: 98401 03686

DIVORCEE

THOUGHTFUL, SUCCESSFUL 48, 180cm, well–educated, US–based professional. Seeks compatible bride. Caste/ language no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

GOUNDER AGE 50/163cm,B.Com Fair Govt Sal:80K.Pm Need Any Govt, well Settled Bride No Age Limit 9842941182

HINDI

1985/175CM, 50 Lakhs PA, Never Married, Bangalore. WhatsApp: 96290 12248

Arora 31year 185 BITS Pilani SE upper middle class, income 60 lakhs. Looking for tall benguluru settled pritty girl. Caste no bar. Cont: 9460644413.

MALAYALAM

Hindu Nadar Boy, Trivandrum, 33/181, Thrikketta, PhD Computer Science from Australia (thesis submitted) seeks alliance from any educated Hindu Family. Contact: 7012888675

ARISTOCRATIC AFFLUENT handsome Menon Boy, 27, 180 cm, B.Tech (NIT), MS (USA), Pooradam. Presently working at USA. Seeks alliance from parents of professionally qualified well settled, beautiful Nair girls preferably below 25 years. 9446540872.

Menon / Nair 28/183cm, M.Tech(IIIT), IT Professional Financially Sound, seeks Suitable Bride. Ct: 94401 85113

TAMIL

Graduate, 47 yrs, Divorcee, Christian, BC, Chennai, Private sector, 1.00 lakh p.m. Contact 9566197522.

CHRISTIAN NADAR, Doctor, Divorcee 37yrs/178cm, MBBS, Dip in Cardiology better earning lives in Nagercoil seeks qualified/ Divorced Bride. 9003983230

RC 1973 born 165cm MA MBA divorce manager Govt. 1.1 Lpm seeks any bride ct: 8148842983

CHRISTIAN, Born again, NRI, VVIP, 100 Crores, 8138900316,

CHRISTIAN B.E. MBA (NIT& IIM)29 years well Placed boy Seeks Proposals From God Fearing Employed Girls Contact: 9444777290 / 7397049611

CHRISTIAN, 31, divorced, MD, Doctor, 50 lakhs, caste/religion no bar. 8137003549

CHRISTIAN, 27, UK, MBA, 30 crores, fair. 8138900652

CHRISTIAN, 30, born again, MNC, Australia. 8138900316

RC CHRISTIAN, 42yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, works for mnc, Chennai. CT–9500188067

MUSLIM, COIMBATORE, 34/178cms, Athletic, BE MBA, working BLR, 35+ LPA, seeks Family Oriented upper middle class Tamil/Urdu/Malayalam speaking MBA/Dr/CA/Arch, Working beautiful bride < 31. WA: 9789490721.

TELUGU

SEEKS BRIDE GROOM for Naidu age 39/172 MSc divorce no children upper middle class. Seeks well settled equal groom. Cell No. 9842470621.

44 Yrs /165cm/ SWE/ Bengaluru. OC/ Caste no bar. seeks Engineer/Doctor/ Professional Groom. Ct: 9182734077

Tall Beautiful, Reddy, Divorcee Girl 31 years 174 cm from elite, affluent and well Educated Family in Hyderabad with Family networth of 150 cr looking for a City based Telugu speaking Boy with min Height of 178 cm from similar background. Pls. Contact 9100796691

URDU

✔ **SUNNI MUSLIM** girl, 94born , 164cm , B.Tech ,never married,working in PSU bank Mumbai.U.P rooted family well settled in Rajasthan. Father retired Addl.Director. #9461179587

✔ **SUNNI MUSLIM** Mumbai based Urdu speaking Religious family seeking Groom from India or abroad for their only daughter (32 years) B.F.M., CFA Level 2, Digital Marketing Professional,Fair, Good looking. Contact : +91 – 7977313228

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BUSINESS

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CONTACT: 8610870247

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INVESTOR NEEDED for a 30–years MLCP, steel & Infra company. Up to 100 crore investment 20% + ROI. Project turnover 1000cr in 5years backed by land / shares. Ct: Baba-Jayaraman 7418655555 mail: jram@estar.in

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GENERAL

KENNEL PETS

MADRAS CANINE Club's Triple all breeds Championship dog shows, Three speciality shows and obedience trials on 31st January & 1st February 2026 at St Bedes School, Cricket Ground, Karneswar Pagoda Street, near Light House, Mylapore, Chennai 600004. For show entries, stalls Contact Secretary, Old No 51, Seventh Cross Street, Shenoy Nagar West, Chennai-600030.Phone:044-26260693 Mob: 98840 46278. If your dog is registered with KCI, you could participate at the dog show.

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M BG-BGE

A village comes up with its own solution for screen addiction

Rishikesh Bahadur Desai
BELAGAVI

Every evening at 7 p.m., a siren fixed to the top of the Shivaji memorial rings for two minutes in Halaga village in Belagavi district in north Karnataka. Children, playing in the streets, start running home. They are expected to study uninterrupted for the next two hours.

Says Shivaji Janappa Santaji, who works in a tailoring shop, with a smile, "We have told them that each mobile is linked to the nearby police station and that police will pick up any child who watches videos or plays games. I think this has had some effect. If you visit our village between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m., you will find that at least 70% of the TVs are switched off and mobiles are not being used."

Halaga village is in the news for announcing a two-hour mandatory study period in the evening for children. The village elders have asked parents to switch off TV and mobile phones during this period.

Post-COVID situation

Sadanand Basvant Bilgoji, gram panchayat member and former president, said that the gram panchayat was worried about the increasing screen addiction among youngsters.

"In 2021, we were able to defeat the COVID virus, but we ended up introducing the virus of screen addiction. We forced them to study using mobile phones and consume all content electronically. That has become a problem we can not tackle easily. Some of our members were inspired by a mobile ban implemented in Dhulegaon in Sangli in Maharashtra. We passed a resolution in the gram panchayat, bought a siren and began the experiment from December 17," he said.

The gram panchayat in Halaga has asked residents to switch off TV and mobile phones from 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. to enable students to study. P.K. BADIGER

"Our message is not just for students, but also parents. Let us all talk to each other and build and maintain friendships."

Peeraji Hanumant Balekundri, a construction worker, said he was happy that the village is adopting such a practice as it would help the students. "I could not study beyond primary school as my family could not afford it. Today, we are able to send our children to college, but they are spending a too much time on mobile phones and neglecting studies. We will be happy if this compulsory study period will help them get free seats in government colleges," he said.

The village passed a resolution, bought a siren and began the experiment of switching off TVs and mobile phones from December 17. P.K. BADIGER

However, enforcement of the rule is proving to be not so easy across the board. Elders are finding it easier to discipline children than teenagers.

The nay sayers

The second and more important factor is the social divisions. Residents of the Basti Oni (where mostly Kannada-speaking Jains live) feel they were not involved in the decision-making process.

"Some Marathas in the gram panchayat have taken this decision and announced it in a hurry. Other panchayat members or community leaders were not consulted," says Mahaveer Halagekar, a shopkeeper, while he watches a Kannada serial on TV.

Ramachandra Bua, who works in a hotel, said the ban on use of mobile phones during the time is making it difficult to accept UPI payments. Maragappa Kamble, a resident of Ambedkar Nagar, said, "No one has come to our lane requesting us to switch off TVs or not use mobile phones."

The Halaga gram panchayat's experiment has not been easy to implement, but it says its intentions are in the interest of not just students but also their parents

Mr. Bilgoji denied allegations that the gram panchayat decision was unilateral. "Before the gram panchayat resolution, we held a meeting with School Development and Management Committee members of all schools here – government and private and Kannada, Marathi and English. We asked the village temple committee members and some government officers. We have gone around the village, in all the gallis at least 3 to 4 times. We will also go again, if needed. Our intention is good," he insists.

THE HINDU IMPACT

Eshwar Khandre TH

Minister seeks report on objections to KIOCL forest clearance plea

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Saturday directed the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) to submit a detailed report within seven days on the issues raised by Praveen Bhargav, trustee of Wildlife First, a non-government organisation, over the proposal by Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited (KIOCL) seeking ex-post facto forest clearance for the alleged illegal submergence of forest land in the Kudremukh region.

The directive follows a report published by *The Hindu* on December 24, 2025, which highlighted Wildlife First's appeal to the Karnataka government to reject KIOCL's application for retrospective forest clearance. In his order, Mr. Khandre asked the PCCF to examine all aspects raised in the representation and furnish a detailed report by seven days.

In his letter to senior forest department officials, Mr. Bhargav expressed shock that the proposal was being considered at all, arguing that it should have been rejected outright. He cited observations made by the Conservator of Forests (Mangaluru), who reportedly stated that ex-post facto clearance ought not to be granted in this case.

Mr. Bhargav urged the State government to reject KIOCL's proposal and ensure recovery of ₹139.15 crore as penalty for the alleged violations. He also demanded that 1,401 hectares of government land be formally included within the boundaries of Kudremukh National Park.

Mr. Bhargav had addressed his letter to Additional Chief Secretary (Forests, Ecology and Environment) Anjum Parvez, PCCF and Head of Forest Force Meenakshi Negi, PCCF and Chief Wildlife Warden P.C. Ray, and PCCF (Forest Conservation) Mahesh B. Shirur.

CM, Dy CM to meet high command after Jan. 6

Siddaramaiah fails to hold talks with Rahul Gandhi on Cabinet reshuffle; says Congress will launch a protest in the State from January 5 opposing the newly enacted VB-G Ram G

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who attended the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting in New Delhi on Saturday, has not been able to hold talks on the possible Cabinet reshuffle and other State-related issues with Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and returned to the State.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah arriving for the Congress Working Committee meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

Both spoken to

However, sources in the Congress maintained that the senior functionary in the AICC has spoken to both Mr. Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, and told them to be prepared to visit the nation capital after January 6, 2026, for discussions to related to the proposed leadership change, the Cabinet reshuffle and the change of the KPCC president.

Sources maintained that the members of the Sonia Gandhi family are expected to tour abroad at the end of this year, and this has caused postponement of talks between the State Congress leaders and the high command.

Protest in Karnataka

Meanwhile, in a release, the Chief Minister said the Congress has decided to launch a protest in the State from January 5 as a part of the nationwide stir, opposing the newly enacted Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G Ram G) by the NDA government.

The CWC, in its meeting, the Chief Minister said, has decided to protect the UPA-era rural job guarantee law.

The MGNREGA Bachao Abhiyan (Save MGNREGA programme) will be held from January 5 next year, arguing that the BJP government will have to face people's anger as the new law is aimed at "taking money away from the poor and handing it to industrialists".

The Congress Working Committee meeting was chaired by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and attended by senior leaders, including Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

Meanwhile, a handful of people on Saturday staged a demonstration in front of Congress headquarters in New Delhi demanding that a Dalit be appointed as Karnataka's Chief Minister. The banner held by the protesters had an image of Home Minister G. Parameshwara.

BJP will abide by central leadership's decision on tie-up with JD(S): Vijayendra

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra on Saturday said the party's Karnataka unit would abide by the decision of the BJP's central leadership on its electoral alliance with the Janata Dal (Secular), a day after JD(S) supremo and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda announced that his party would contest local body elections independently.

Speaking to reporters here, Mr. Vijayendra said decisions on the alliance were taken by the party's central leadership, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and the State unit would respect and follow those decisions.

"Our central leadership decided to join hands with the JD(S). Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda also took a decision to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Modi. We respect that and will abide by the decision taken by our central leadership," he said.

Conciliatory tone

Mr. Vijayendra avoided any direct response to Mr. Gowda's assertion that the JD(S) would not have an alliance with the BJP in local body elections, adopting a conciliatory tone instead. Describing Mr. Gowda as a senior statesman, he said, "Mr. Deve Gowda is a tall leader of the State. I respect him as much as I respect my father. Both are mass leaders."

BJP State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra addressing a press conference in Bengaluru on Saturday.

He reiterated that on all issues related to electoral alliances, the State unit would act in accordance with the directions of the central leadership.

What Gowda said

Mr. Gowda, on Friday, clarified that while the BJP-JD (S) alliance would continue for Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, the regional party would contest taluk panchayat, zilla panchayat and urban local body elections independently.

He said local-level contests depended on organisational strength and could not be decided at the national level.

Mr. Vijayendra also criticised the Congress government in Karnataka, alleging misgovernance, corruption and a collapse of law and order in the State.

Referring to the outcome of the recently concluded local body elections in Dakshina Kannada, where Congress lost two of three town panchayats to which polls were held, he said public anger against the ruling party was evident.

"The people have sent a clear message to the Congress government to either govern or step aside," he said.

V.R. Sudarshan for appointing deserving leaders to PSU boards

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Former Chairman of the Legislative Council and KPCC vice-president V.R. Sudarshan has urged the State government to appoint deserving party leaders to various public sector boards as non-official directors without further delay.

V.R. Sudarshan

In a letter to the Chief Minister, the Congress leader suggested to Siddaramaiah to consider the names recommended by the committee headed by Home Minister G. Parameshwara for various government-owned boards and corporations.

He has also drawn the attention of the Chief Minister to the nomination of party cadres, proposed by legislators, MPs, DCC chiefs and senior leaders of the party, to various public sector undertakings as non-official directors on the boards.

In a letter to Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC chief D.K. Shivakumar, Mr. Sudarshan urged him to convene a meeting of KPCC office-bearers and the executive committee to discuss the political scenario in the State and the implementation of various policies and programmes of the government.

Three-day event to promote rationalism

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

To mark Rashtrakavi Kuvempu's birthday as "rationalism day", three-day national science convention will be held in Yadgir from Sunday till December 30. It is the fifth convention being held to mark the day. According to Karnataka Rajya Vaijnanika Samshodhana Parishat, which is organising the programme, the Department of Science and Technology and Manava Bandhutva Vedike are partnering with it to hold the event.

Karnataka Public Work Department
(A Government of KarnatakaEnterprises) O/O Executive Engineer PWD Division, Hosapete, Dist:-Vijayanagara

No:EE/PWD/Dn/Hosapete/TND/ AE-1 /2025-26/ 3133 Date:- 23.12.2025

Short Term E-Tender Notification

Tenders are invited by undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, PWD Division Hosapete, Vijayanagara Dist, for the works notified in the statement below. The bid shall be in One or Two Cover system namely technical bid and financial bid through KPP Portal, following the link **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sl. No	Work Indent No	Estimate Cost (Rs in Lakhs)	Sl. No	Work Indent No	Estimate Cost (Rs in Lakhs)
1	PWD/2025-26/BR/WORK_INDENT30465	15.00	8	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29536	495.00
2	PWD/2025-26/BR/WORK_INDENT30232	10.50	9	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29014	490.00
3	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29537	50.00	10	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29017	490.00
4	PWD/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT30319	20.00	11	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29829	207.00
5	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29538	495.00	12	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29830	200.01
6	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29539	495.00	13	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT30725	100.65
7	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT29540	250.00	14	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT30752	150.00

		For Sl No 1 & 4	From Sl No 5 to 14
1	Quarries of Tender On	As Per kppp Portal.	As Per kppp Portal.
2	Last Date of Tender Submission On	03/01/2026 @ 16.00 Hours	12/01/2026 @ 16.00 Hours
3	Tender Opening date On	05/01/2026 @ 16.30 Hours	13/01/2026 @ 16.30 Hours
4	Financial Bid Opening Date	As Per kppp Portal.	As Per kppp Portal.

Note: Any Changes Either in Tender date or any other condition , Tenderers can view in kppp Portal and Will not be published in News Paper.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division Hosapete, Vijayanagara District.

DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/417

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL,
No.4 BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi.

No:EE/KNNL/BDN-4/TA/PB-1/4701/Bhadar/Corrigendum Tender Notification No:02/2025-26: Dated: 24.12.2025

Corrigendum-1
(Through E-Procurement Portal only)

Name of Work: Regarding the tender of 75/7.5 T & 45/4.5 T Left Bank Golath Crane

Reference: No: EE/KNNL/BDN-4/TA/PB-1/4701 Bhadra/Tender Notification No: 14/2025-26: Dated: 17.12.2025

The following modifications are made in the Calendar of Events of the Notifications in above reference of Sl.No. 3 & 4 Works which was uploaded in the **(http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** and the details are as below:

As in Notification	
Date of Access to tender document and submission of completed tender form	19.12.2025 to 30.12.2025 up to 17.30 Hrs
Opening of First Electronic Document Technical Bid	31.12.2025 @ 17.30 Hrs.
Now to be read as:	
Date of Access to tender document and submission of completed tender form	19.12.2025 to 16.01.2026 up to 17.30 Hrs
Opening of First Electronic Document Technical Bid	17.01.2026 @ 17.30 Hrs.

All other items and conditions remain un-altered. Further details and information can be had from **(http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** link OR undersigned in all working days during Office hours on telephone No.: 8660573513

Sd/-
Executive Engineer. KNNL,
No.4, BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi.

DIPR/SMG/No-161-12/zenkar/2025-26

Chargesheet names Allu Arjun, 22 others in stampede case

Lavpreet Kaur
HYDERABAD

Allu Arjun

Actor Allu Arjun has been named among the 23 accused in a chargesheet filed in connection with a stampede during the premiere of Pushpa 2 at Sandhya Theatre in Chikkadpally, Telangana on December 4, 2024.

M. Revathi, 35, was killed, and her nine-year-old son, Sritej, was critically injured in the stampede.

The chargesheet, filed earlier this week by the Chikkadpally police, names the actor's personal security staff and the theatre management.

The accused include theatre partners Agamati Ram Reddy, alias Pedda Ram Reddy (also the owner); Agamati Ram Reddy, alias Chinna Ram Reddy; M. Sandeep; M. Sumeeth, alias Mittu; Agamati Vinay Kumar; Agamati Ashutosh Reddy; M. Renuka Devi; and Agamati Aruna Reddy, followed by theatre manager M. Nagaraju; and lower balcony in-charge Gandhakam Vijay Chander.

Actor Allu Arjun figures as accused number 11, followed by his managers Josya Bhatla Santosh Kumar and Sharat Bunny, alias Sharath Chandra Naidu; fans' association in-charge Tatipamula Vinay Kumar, alias Arjun Kumar; event organiser Talla Kiran Kumar Goud, alias Raju; and his assistant Mohammed Parvez; personal security guards Cheruku Ramesh and Sriramula Raju; and bouncers Ibrahim Mohammed Firdosh, Azam Pasha, alias Babi, D. Mahesh, Raj Antony Demello, alias Antony, and Peggapuram Satyamurthy.

Of the 23 accused, 14 were arrested during the investigation, while nine secured anticipatory bail and were served notices, the police said.

Hyderbad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar said that the investigation had found lapses in planning, crowd control, security arrangements and coordination among the theatre management, event organisers, private security personnel and others associated with the event. The chargesheet was submitted on December 24, over a year after the case was registered.

"The investigation has been completed with all the evidence on record, and the final report has been filed before the court. The legal process will now take its course," an official said. The actor and the other accused were subjected to several rounds of questioning during the course of the probe.

Families find names spread across pages of Kerala rolls

Officials say the dispersal occurred owing to adjustments to cap voters at 1,200 per polling station; CEO says steps will be taken to regroup members of every family under one polling station

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The EC currently has 25,468 polling stations in Kerala. With the voter population being limited to 1,200 per station, steps have been taken to add a little over 5,000 more stations. H. VIBHU

After the draft electoral rolls under the special intensive revision (SIR) was published in Kerala on December 23, many families have found it hard to track down their own kin. This is because, on the rolls, they are either scattered within the same polling station or across multiple stations. But if things pan out, these voters will be regrouped under the same polling stations.

According to election officials, such dispersals occurred primarily on account of the adjustments made to limit the number of voters to 1,200 per polling station in accordance with an Election Commission of India (EC) decision. The decision was meant to avoid long queues on polling days.

Weekly meet

The situation where members of the same family being dispersed across polling stations or being listed apart from each other in the same station, has also made it difficult for political parties to examine the draft rolls and track down voters, political parties informed Chief Electoral Officer (Kerala) [CEO] Rathan U. Kelkar at the weekly political party meeting on SIR here on Saturday.

Mr. Kelkar said steps will be taken to regroup scattered members of such families under one polling station.

Voters to be regrouped

"We will identify such people who are scattered and re-serialise and regroup them as a family under one polling station," he said.

The Election Commission of India has 25,468 polling stations in Kerala at present. With the voter population being limited to 1,200 per station, steps have been taken to add a little over 5,000 more polling stations.

Mr. Kelkar's office is also preparing to publish the details of which voters have been transferred from one polling station to another as part of the rearrangement of polling stations.

Voters will be notified a week before hearing

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Voters called for hearings under the special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral roll in Kerala will get a week's time to be ready, election officials said here on Saturday.

Chief Electoral Officer Rathan U. Kelkar said the stipulation is that a minimum of one week's time should be given. Voters can use this period to collect the necessary documents and be ready, he said.

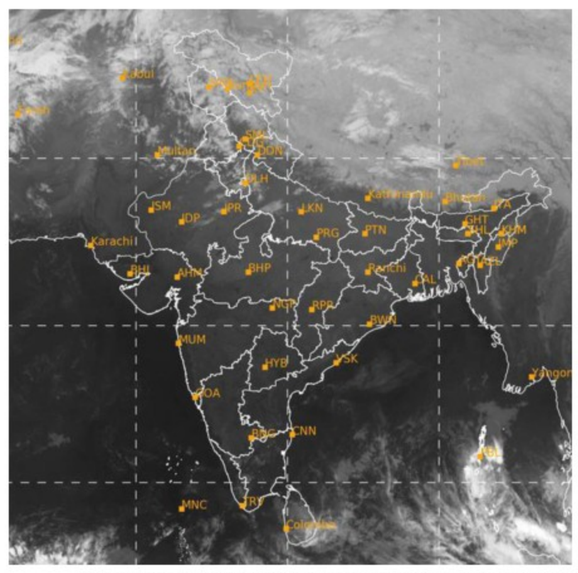
Notice will be served on voters in the draft roll who could not be mapped with the 2002 SIR list. This list has 19.32 lakh voters in all. But election officials are trying to limit the number of hearings.

At his weekly meeting with political parties here on Saturday, Mr. Kelkar said the decision on whether hearings are actually needed - including in cases related to the unmapped voters and cases of inconsistencies in the entries in draft - is taken by the Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) and Assistant EROs (AERO), Mr. Kelkar said.

Mr. Kelkar said that only "100% ineligible voters" will be deleted from the rolls.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Thunderstorm with lightning & gusty winds likely at isolated places over Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Cold wave conditions likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. Dense fog likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Bihar, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim and Odisha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	20.9	12.8	Kozhikode	—	32.6	22.5
Ahmedabad	—	27.4	15.1	Kurnool	—	30.3	17.0
Aizawl	—	28.7	10.0	Lucknow	—	18.0	10.8
Allahabad	—	16.8	9.1	Madurai	—	31.4	21.1
Bengaluru	—	26.7	15.9	Mangaluru	—	31.9	20.8
Bhopal	—	23.5	4.6	Mumbai	—	32.7	17.4
Bhubaneswar	—	27.3	13.3	Mysuru	—	27.8	13.0
Chandigarh	—	20.1	6.9	New Delhi	—	22.2	7.8
Chennai	—	29.1	20.4	Patna	—	14.8	12.1
Coimbatore	—	28.8	19.8	Port Blair	—	30.1	24.4
Dehradun	—	22.6	7.2	Puducherry	—	30.0	20.0
Gangtok	—	16.9	8.3	Pune	—	29.6	14.8
Goa	—	32.7	19.5	Raipur	—	27.1	12.4
Guwahati	—	24.8	13.9	Ranchi	—	22.2	7.9
Hubballi	—	29.0	13.0	Shillong	—	18.0	6.0
Hyderabad	—	27.8	13.4	Shimla	—	19.2	7.5
Imphal	—	23.2	10.7	Srinagar	—	10.7	-2.6
Jaipur	—	24.1	9.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.4	23.0
Kochi	—	30.8	22.8	Tiruchi	—	29.7	20.4
Kohima	—	14.8	9.9	Vijayawada	—	29.0	18.8
Kolkata	—	24.0	13.2	Visakhapatnam	—	27.7	19.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.96	..74	.67	...134	...161	
Bengaluru	...8	..16	.35	...149	...153	
Chennai	...8	..20	.29	...174	...127	
Delhi	.37	..49	153	...416	...393	
Hyderabad	.13	..21	.49	...134	...141	
Kolkata	.11	..49	.40	...283	...227	
Lucknow	...7	..44	.60	...252	...225	
Mumbai	...9	..66	.48	...245	...131	
Pune	.19	109	.87	...255	...185	
Visakhapatnam	.18	..75	.50	...316	...247	

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 409 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 13

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

In Memory of Farouk Irani

We remember with love and admiration the life of Farouk Merwan Irani, who passed away peacefully, on December 27, 2025, at the age of 85.

Born in Mumbai, and educated in Darjeeling, Farouk dedicated his professional life to the financial services and business in Chennai. He was known as the father of leasing in India.

A devoted husband to Sherna, he provided strength and companionship throughout their journey together.

As a father, he was deeply loved by his daughters, Farah and Lia, whom he raised with unwavering support and love.

His grandchildren, Jeh and Bijaan, will miss his warmth, wisdom, and presence, yet they will carry forward his knowledge and passion for reading and political affairs.

Farouk lived a life of dignity, kindness, and love for us, his family. Though his absence leaves a profound void, his values will always remain and guide us.

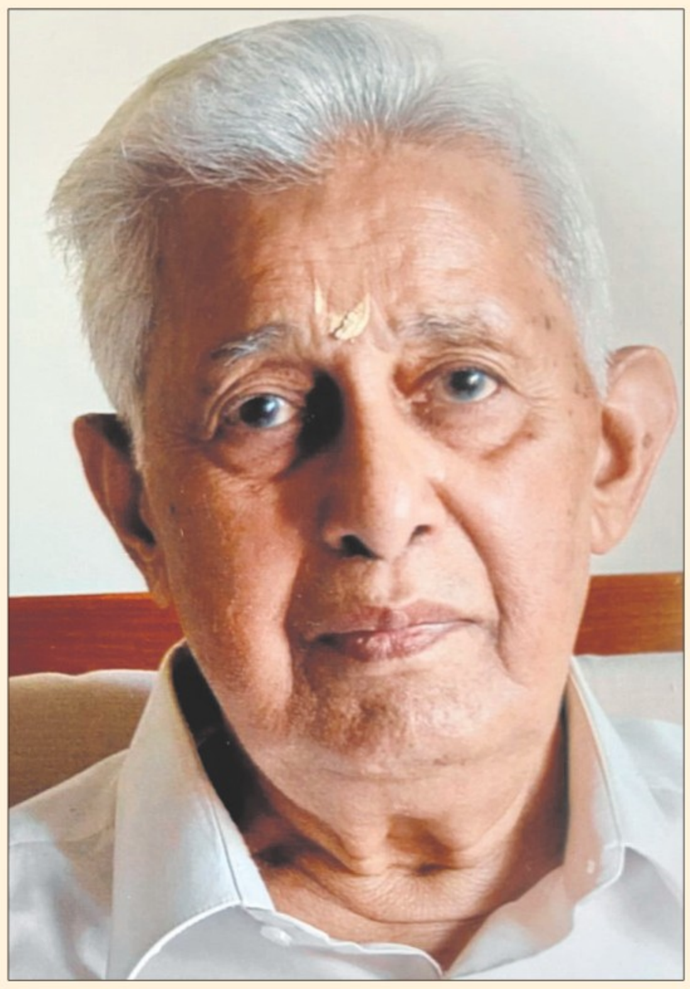
DEATH

We announce the sad demise of

SHRI M. R. SUBRAMANIAM

on 27th December 2025,

at his residence in Bangalore.



न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि
नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ।।

He is survived by his loving wife, four children, and grandchildren.

In Memory: Kamala, Shanker, Sundar, Sriram, Gouri & families.

CONTACT: 9845182164

From Page One

10.56 lakh names cut on draft rolls in Assam

"The Election Commission of India has concluded the House-to-House (H2H) verification phase of the Special Revision (SR) - 2026 in Assam. This exercise aimed to ensure an inclusive, accurate, and transparent electoral roll for the state," said a statement from the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Assam.

The total number of electors in Assam, according to the CEO's office, is 2,52,02,775. However, this includes more than 93,000 "D voters", whose cases are pending before Foreigners' Tribunals and who are not permitted to vote in elections until their citizenship is upheld by a court.

The 61,03,103 household visits across the State covered the 2,51,09,752 voters excluding the "D voters", the CEO's office said. Claims and objections to the roll can be filed till January 22.

New electors can apply for a claim to be included in the roll by filling Form 6, the CEO's statement said, adding that electors can submit Form 7 to object to the proposed inclusion of a name or apply to delete a name on the existing rolls. People who have shifted away from their earlier registered address must use Form 8 to apply for a change of residence in the electoral records. The final electoral roll will be published on February 10.

In the draft electoral rolls published after the first phase of the SIR in West Bengal on December 16, the names of 58,20,899 voters were struck off the electoral rolls, reducing the State's electorate to 7.08 crore. These 58 lakh deletions included around 32 lakh 'unmapped' electors.

Hearings for these unmapped voters will take place until February 7, across 11 desks in each of the 294 Assembly constituencies, in the presence of 294 electoral registration officers (EROs), 3,200 assistant electoral registration officers (AEROs), over 80,000 booth-level officers (BLOs), and 4,600 micro-observers, sources in the West Bengal CEO's office said. The final voter list for the State will be published on February 14.

While most hearings concluded peacefully on Saturday, tensions were reported at the hearing centre at Asansol, where supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Trinamool Congress clashed verbally.

In certain instances, electors over the age of 80 were also seen attending hearings after travelling long distances. Sources in the CEO's office had earlier said that alternative arrangements were being planned for electors of over 85 years of age who received notices for hearings.

Cong. to protest against new rural job Act

Addressing the media after the CWC meet, Mr. Kharge questioned the Centre's decision to scrap the MGNREGA, when even the NITI Aayog had concluded that it could help create durable assets and productive schemes. He criticised the provisions under the new legislation, saying these would increase the State government's liability under the revised scheme.

Mr. Gandhi emphasised that the MGNREGA was not just a scheme but a rights-based concept. The law was widely lauded across the globe, he said, accusing the BJP-led government of undermining the federal structure of the country, and snatching the power of the gram panchayats. He remarked that money was being taken from the States by the Centre, leading not only to a centralised concentration of power but of finances as well. He said the decision was directly taken by the PMO without taking the Minister concerned or the Cabinet into confidence. "This is a one-man show," he remarked. As many other decisions, this was aimed to benefit a few corportate friends of the Prime Minister, he said.

The CWC members took an oath, pledging to collectively struggle to secure the right to dignity, employment, and fair and timely compensation due to India's rural workers.

Why appoint micro observers in West Bengal, asks Trinamool

Party general secretary asks EC to publish the list of 'infiltrators' and 'logical discrepancies', says he will pose the questions to the panel in New Delhi; five-member Trinamool delegation visits Chief Electoral Officer of Bengal and raises objections

Shrabana Chatterjee
Moyurie Som
KOLKATA

Trinamool leaders, from left, Moloy Ghatak, Manas Ranjan Bhunia, Chandrima Bhattacharya, Aroop Biswas and Shashi Panja at a press conference after meeting the Chief Electoral Officer. PTI

Trinamool Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday questioned why the Election Commission of India (EC) appointed micro observers in West Bengal when it had the least number of voter deletions in the special intensive revision (SIR) process.

Based on previous claims by the Bharatiya Janta Party alleging there are over one crore "infiltrators" in West Bengal, Mr. Banerjee, the second-in-command in the Trinamool, asked the EC to publish list of infiltrators.

"According to the draft electoral rolls data published by the EC, Tamil Nadu had 12.57% voter deletions, Gujarat had 9.95% deletions, Chhattisgarh had 8.76% deletions, Kerala had 6.65% deletions, in West Bengal the number was the lowest at 5.79%... still they appointed micro observers here not in the other States where there were massive deletions," Mr. Banerjee added.

The SIR was carried out in West Bengal just to "harass" the people, Mr. Banerjee said. Of the 58 lakh deleted voters on the draft voter list, he asked the EC to clarify who among these people are "infiltrators". He raised questions about why the EC was not sending show-cause notices to these alleged "infiltrators" to identify them.

"If cleaning the voter list is your goal, then publish the names of the 1.36 crore people who have been flagged in the logical discrepancies category... Why are you not transparent about it? Why is the EC scared to publish the list," Mr Banerjee asked.

MP to head for Delhi

The Trinamool Lok Sabha MP for Diamond Harbour constituency said that he would head to New Delhi on December 31 to pose these questions to EC officials and meet Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

"If they do not answer our questions, we will gherao the EC office and protest," Mr. Banerjee said.

He said the EC officials should apologise to the people of West Bengal for instilling unnecessary fear in the people if they did not publish the list of "infiltrators" and "logical discrepancies".

The MP said the party will take to the streets in West Bengal from January 2 and take these pressing issues to the people of the State. Mr. Banerjee also raised questions about why the other States that share borders with Bangladesh have not been made part of the SIR process, like Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram to identify and take out alleged "Bangladeshi infiltrators" and why West Bengal was singled out.

Meanwhile, a five-member delegation of the Trinamool Congress visited Chief Electoral Officer of West Bengal, Manoj Kumar Agarwal, on Saturday and raised several objections over alleged 'departures from statutory mandates' in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision in the State.

"A certain political party has set a target of the removal of two crore electors from the State's voter list. With that target in mind, the Election Commission first removed 58 lakh voters [absent, shifted, dead and duplicate] and are questioning 1.36 crore more [electors with logical discrepancies]. We have voiced our protest against this," Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said after their meeting with the CEO on Saturday.

CEC begins Odisha visit, hails BLOs as pillars of polls

Press Trust of India
BHUBANESWAR

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday began his three-day visit to Odisha with prayers at the Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri, and describing booth-level officers (BLOs) as the "pillars of the election process".

Accompanied by his family, Mr. Kumar arrived at the Biju Patnaik International Airport and proceeded to Puri for darshan of the sibling deities - Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath.

Interaction with BLOs

"I have come to Odisha with my family to have darshan of Lord Jagannath, to understand and experience the local culture, and to meet our booth-level officers, who are the pillars of our election process," he told reporters.

Later, Mr. Kumar visited the Sun Temple at Konark. On the second day, he is scheduled to tour several heritage and cultural sites, including the Mukteswar Temple in Bhubaneswar.

He will interact with around 700 booth-level-officers from Khurda and Cuttack districts on December 29 in Bhubaneswar.

Unnao rape case: survivor seeks FIR against former investigation officer

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Activists and others sit on a dharna outside the Parliament House complex on Saturday demanding justice for the Unnao rape victim. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The victim of the 2017 Unnao rape case, in which former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar was convicted, has approached the CBI seeking the registration of an FIR against the then investigating officer for being "hand in glove" with the former legislator.

The development comes amid growing disappointment in several quarters after the Delhi High Court recently granted conditional bail to Sengar and suspended his life sentence in the case.

Sengar, however, will remain in jail as he is also serving a 10-year term for the custodial death of the rape survivor's father.

In her complaint, the victim alleged that the investigating officer conducted the probe dishonestly, with mala fides, and in such a way that Sengar and the other accused may get the benefits of "deliberate lapses and manipulation of facts introduced, and secure a favourable outcome".

She alleged that the officer used forged school documents in the chargesheet, wherein she was shown as a student of a government school, whereas, in reality, she never took admission in that school. Also, several statements were falsely attributed to her in the chargesheet, she claimed.

In the six-page complaint, the victim claimed she filed a complaint earlier as well, but no action was taken against the officer.

Protesters detained

The Delhi Police on Saturday detained activist Yogita Bhayana, Congress leader Mumtaz Patel and several other protesters who were staging a sit-in near the Parliament complex to oppose the suspension of the life sentence of Unnao rape convict Kuldeep Singh Sengar, an official said.

The protesters reached the area around 4 p.m. and sat on the road, raising slogans and demanding the cancellation of the bail granted to Sengar, he said.

Top court to hear *suo motu* case on Aravallis' definition

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to take *suo motu* cognisance on Monday of the public concern and furore over the recent definition of what constitutes the protected Aravalli Hills and range amid fears that it would open the gates for unbridled mining and ecological harm.

The three-judge Special Vacation Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant will hear the matter.

In a judgment in November, the top court accepted the recommendations of a committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, defining the 'Aravalli Hills' as any landform with an elevation of 100 metres or more above the local relief and an 'Aravalli Range' as a collection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other.

The court had also accepted the recommendations for sustainable mining and the steps to be taken to prevent illegal mining in Aravalli Hills and Ranges.

It had directed the authorities to identify permissible areas for "mining and ecologically sensitive, conservation-critical and restoration priority areas within the Aravalli where mining shall be strictly prohibited or permitted only under scientifically justified circumstances".

Suvendu Adhikari accused of hate speech against Bangladesh

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Suvendu Adhikari

Highlighting a remark made by the Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari in front of the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission on Friday, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Saturday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader had indulged in "hate speech", and called for "mass murder" and "ethnic cleansing".

"The way Israel taught a lesson in Gaza, the government of the country which is run in the interest of 100 crore Hindus should also teach a lesson [to Bangladesh] like Operation Sindoor," the BJP leader was heard saying outside the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata on Friday .

"@BJP4India has perfected HATE and INTOLERANCE into an art form. Their venomous loudmouth, @SuvenduWB, just bared his fascist fangs again, spewing genocidal bile by proclaiming that India must teach Muslims a lesson like Israel taught Gaza," West Bengal's ruling party said on social media.

The Trinamool termed the remarks "naked hate speech, a bloodthirsty call for mass murder and ethnic cleansing".

'Hitler-in-the-making'

"No FIR (First Information Report). No arrest. No prosecution. No UAPA [Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act] slapped on this Hitler-in-the-making," the Trinamool said, adding that the people of the State should remember his statement when Mr. Adhikari "dangles Humayun Kabir as a carrot for Muslim votes".

Trinamool Congress MP and the party's deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Sagarika Ghose also reacted to the remarks.

"@BJP4India's Bengal 'face' wants a Gaza like operation against Bangladesh," Ms. Ghose said on social media.

Zero FIR lodged by West Bengal Police in the killing of migrant

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Describing the killing of a migrant worker from West Bengal in Odisha as a "heart-breaking incident", Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday said that the State police had already filed a zero first information report (FIR) at the Suti police station. A police team from West Bengal has gone to Odisha to investigate, Ms. Banerjee added.

Juyel Rana, a 19-year-old migrant labourer from Suti in Jangipur in West Bengal, was killed at Sambalpur in Odisha on December 24, allegedly by a group of local people.

The family of the deceased has alleged that the perpetrators attacked him on suspicion of being Bangladeshi since he was speaking in Bengali.

"Very recently, various forms of oppression have descended upon some migrant workers from the Jangipur area in the BJP-ruled Odisha State.... Migrant workers in Murshidabad are returning home terrified from Odisha," the Chief Minister posted on social media.

Six persons had so far been arrested in the incident, and the police would leave no stones unturned to press for the highest possible punishment for the guilty, the West Bengal police said on social media.

Tripura student's killing renews calls for anti-racial violence law

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The killing of a tribal student from Tripura in Dehradun has renewed calls for a dedicated anti-racial violence law in the country.

Anjel Chakma, a 24-year-old MBA student from Pecharthal in North Tripura, died in a Dehradun hospital on Friday, more than a fortnight after he was stabbed by a group of allegedly intoxicated men. According to the Chakma Development Foundation of India (CDFI), the assailants had abused Anjel and his brother Michael with racial slurs before attacking them.

The police have arrested five residents in connection with the incident, though the prime accused is yet to be apprehended.

Urging Union Home Minister Amit Shah to ensure a fair trial in what it termed a "racially motivated murder", the CDFI recalled the recommendation for an anti-racial violence law made by a committee constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs after the killing of Arunachal Pradesh youth Nido Tania in Delhi in 2014.

"The Uttarakhand police did not act with alacrity. They took three days to register the FIR and did not invoke relevant provisions of law, including Section 109 (attempt to murder) and Section 117(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to grievous hurt by a mob on grounds such as race or caste, as well as provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act," CDFI founder Suhas Chakma said on Saturday.

He added that this delay enabled the prime accused to flee.

The organisation said the killing of Anjel Chakma mirrored earlier incidents of racial violence, including the death of Nido Tania, following which the M.P. Bezbaruah Committee had recommended either a standalone law or suitable amendments to existing criminal laws to address such crimes.

The organisation urged the Union Home Ministry to direct the Uttarakhand government to ensure the immediate arrest of the prime accused, and provide ₹1 crore as compensation to the victim's family.

Protect Kashmiris in other States: Sajad Lone

Press Trust of India
SRINAGAR

Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone on Saturday said "harassment" of Kashmiris in some parts of the country should be treated as a matter of national security, and urged Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to intervene in the matter.

The Handwara MLA appealed to the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister to treat the issue as a matter of national security. His remarks came in the wake of the alleged assault on a Kashmir shawl seller in Uttarakhand.

Mr. Lone said Kashmiris who ventured outside the Union Territory for a livelihood were the ambassadors of national integration, and believed their economic security rested with India. "Then they return here as the ambassadors of India. Today, you are ending these relations of envoyship," he said.

"If our children are in jail under the UAPA for liking a post on Facebook, what stops the Centre from putting these rogues and thugs behind bars under UAPA or PSA?" he said.

Congress has organisational weakness: Digvijaya at CWC

Senior leader questions 'over-centralisation' of decision-making, asks why 'election management department' has still not been constituted, despite earlier CWC meetings resolving to set it up

Sobhana K. Nair
Mehul Malpani
NEW DELHI/BHOPAL

Creating a flutter within the party at the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on Saturday, Rajya Sabha member and senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh flagged gaps in the party's organisational structure, criticising what he described as "overcentralisation" within the Congress.

He questioned why the "election management department" had still not been constituted, despite earlier CWC meetings resolving to set it up. Establishing such a department was announced in May 2022 after a CWC meeting in Udaipur, Rajasthan.

According to sources, Mr. Singh said the State presidents and district presidents of the party are appointed by leaders in Delhi, but there is no functional party machinery below these levels, affecting party work.

The sources said many leaders attending the meeting nodded in agreement as Mr. Singh spoke.

Congress leaders Shashi Tharoor, Salman Khurshid, Abhishek Singhvi, Digvijaya Singh and others at the meeting in New Delhi. PTI

An hour before the meeting, Mr. Singh, in a post on X, tagged Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, party general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi and Jairam Ramesh, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and lauded the RSS and BJP's organisational strength.

He posted an old picture of Mr. Modi sitting on the floor in front of former BJP president L.K. Advani, and called it "impressive". "An RSS/BJP grassroot leader who sat at the feet of his party's leaders became Chief Minister and Prime Minister. This is the power of the organisation," Mr. Singh said.

In another post on December 19, which is pinned on his X profile, Mr. Singh, while appreciating Mr. Gandhi's focus on "socio-economic issues", said the Congress, like the Election Commission, needed reforms. Acknowledging the "Sangathan Srijan" (organisation recreation campaign), he said the party required "more pragmatic decentralised functioning". He further added, "I am sure you would do it because I know you can do it. Only problem is that it is not easy to 'convince' you!!"

Both his posts on X and remarks at the CWC meeting created a flutter. Speaking to presspersons later in the day, Mr. Singh said that he was a staunch opponent of the BJP and the RSS, and accused the two organisations of neither respecting the Constitution nor the country's laws. But, he also reiterated his admiration for their organisational strength.

He said there was room for improvement in the Congress's organisational structure, stating that the organisation was fundamentally a party of movement, but there was a gap between converting the movement into an electoral gain. "Till our organisation is established down to the booth level, we will not be satisfied," he said.

His remarks come six months before his tenure as a Rajya Sabha member ends in May 2026, with many leaders said to be lining up for the seat.

But a close aide denied that his remarks were aimed at retaining the Rajya Sabha seat, insisting that Mr. Singh wants to be more involved with the State Congress and its restructuring.

Cong. shedding crocodile tears on rural jobs scheme, says Agriculture Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

On a day the Congress held a meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) to announce a nationwide campaign against the scrapping of the MGNREGA, Union Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday described the party's "clamour" as "purely political".

Taking to X, Mr. Chouhan posted a detailed note on the replacement of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with the NDA government's Viksit Bharat G-RAM-G Act. (The MGNREGA was brought in by the Congress-led UPA government in 2006.)

"The Congress's clamour is purely political. The Congress lacked both intent and policy. This is the same Congress that appended Mahatma Gandhi's name for electoral gains. This is the same Congress that, from time to time, reduced the budget for MGNREGA. This is the same Congress that froze wages. Today, Congress leaders are shedding crocodile tears," he posted.

> The Congress's clamour is purely political... This is the same Congress that appended Mahatma Gandhi's name for electoral gains.
>
> **SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN**
> Union Agriculture Minister

Lists key clauses

The BJP leader said that "under this scheme, employment has not been diminished; rather, it has been made even stronger. The number of employment days has been increased from 100 to 125 days. There is a provision for unemployment allowance if work is not provided within the stipulated time, and if there is a delay in wage payment, there is a provision for additional compensation on the delayed payment."

He said the gram sabhas and panchayats were being empowered under the Act to identify works and prioritise them. "Responsibility for implementation, monitoring, and quality assurance has been ensured at the local level. By making social audits mandatory, a provision has been made for public review of expenditures and payments," he said.

"Not every panchayat is the same. For those panchayats that are the most backward – where there is still an acute need for employment and a lack of basic infrastructure – arrangements have been made to provide more funds, more assistance, and more opportunities," he added.

However, the Minister did not answer the main criticism of the Opposition, on the funds break-up between the Centre and the States, with a major part of the financial responsibility for the scheme now falling on the States.

Congress has links to global forces that are harming India, says BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday demanded a categorical response from the Congress, alleging that its senior leader Sam Pitroda's recent remarks had "inadvertently exposed" the Opposition party's links with a "nefarious nexus of anti-India global forces".

Citing an interview, BJP MP and national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said Mr. Pitroda had disclosed that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is part of the presidium of the Global Progressive Alliance (GPA), of which Mr. Pitroda himself is a member. According to the BJP, the alliance is connected to an organisation that is part of a network involved in promoting "anti-India narratives".

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi addressing a press meet at the party headquarters on Saturday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

'Exposing the real face'

"Rahul Gandhi's traditional family adviser and the architect of his mindset and psychology, Sam Pitroda, in an interview inadvertently exposed the real face of the Congress," Mr. Trivedi said at a press conference. "He revealed that the Congress holds an official position in the Global Progressive Alliance and that Rahul Gandhi recently visited Germany to participate in its meeting," the BJP leader said.

Mr. Trivedi alleged that Mr. Gandhi frequently travelled abroad to attend events conducted by institutions and groups that had taken positions critical of India, including the recent visit to an institution in Germany.

He also alleged the role of billionaire investor George Soros, whom the BJP has repeatedly accused of attempting to "malign India" and undermine democratically elected governments. He said if the Congress failed to respond clearly to the issue, it would strengthen the BJP's allegation that Mr. Gandhi had become a "permanent representative of an anti-India global alliance" seeking to influence and "mar the democratic process" in the country.

Preacher flies on Chhattisgarh govt. aircraft, kicks up a controversy

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

A video showing Bageshwar Dham head and spiritual preacher Dhirendra Shastri arriving in Chhattisgarh on a government aircraft and an on-duty police officer touching his feet, has drawn sharp criticism from the Opposition Congress, which is questioning the alleged misuse of public money.

Mr. Shastri, accompanied by State Minister Guru Khushwant Saheb, arrived in Raipur on Thursday for a religious discourse in Bhilai town of Durg district. The purported clip shows the two alighting from the aircraft and a police officer in uniform first saluting the Minister and then removing his cap and shoes before proceeding to touch the religious preacher's feet.

Bageshwar Dham head Dhirendra Shastri was accompanied by a Chhattisgarh Minister while alighting from the plane. FILE PHOTO

Congress spokesperson Sushil Anand Shukla questioned the government's move to provide a plane for Mr. Shastri. "The government should issue a clarification on this matter. This is tantamount to looting the State treasury," he said.

Mr. Shukla claimed that Dhirendra Shastri was not a religious leader of the Hindu community or of Sanatan Dharma. "He may be a storyteller or a self-proclaimed godman who performs rituals and spells, but he is neither a religious scholar nor the head of any recognised religious institution. His conduct and ideology are against the country's composite culture. Hinduism and Sanatan Dharma work to unite people, while Dhirendra Shastri creates mutual animosity," Mr. Shukla added.

Meanwhile, several social media users also criticised the government for sending the aircraft, alleging that the Minister's trip to Satna, from where Mr. Shastri purportedly travelled to Raipur, was a way to sidestep protocol-related questions.

The Minister called the allegations baseless. He told *The Hindu* that he had gone to Satna to attend a meeting.

Officers warn of boycotting Bihar Minister

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the Bihar Revenue Service Association (BiRSA) has complained against the conduct of Deputy Chief Minister and Revenue and Land Reforms Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha. The letter, dated December 24, raises serious objections to the language used by the Minister against officers of the department during a public hearing.

"Remarks made by Mr. Sinha on public platforms for some time have not only deeply damaged the dignity of the State's revenue administration but have also deliberately made an entire service cadre the subject of public ridicule and outrage," BiRSA stated.

"The scenes that are constantly being broadcast in the media and on social media clearly show that, in the pursuit of popularity and immediate applause, administrative norms, principles of natural justice, the spirit of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution and service rules are being disregarded," BiRSA said in the letter.

Revenue officers object to the language used by Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha against them.

"Statements like 'I will suspend the official right away, answer here, in front of the public, get an explanation and take immediate action, and the decision will be made on the spot' are not in line with a Constitutional democracy," the association further stated.

The letter, signed by BiRSA president Anand Kumar and general secretary Saurabh Kumar, pointed out that the ongoing public hearing was not representative of democratic administration, but rather a theatrical style of governance.

Mr. Sinha often forgot that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government had been in power for the past two decades, and in his statements, he negated the contributions of previous Ministers and departmental heads, giving an impression that all previous leadership had been completely inactive, and that no improvements had been made in the department, "as if the entire administrative burden of the past 100 years has suddenly fallen on his shoulders", the association said.

Ministers and elected representatives should be subjected to similar public questioning on budget, planning, and policy failures, BiRSA said.

Praising its own officers, the letter stated that the current regional officers had made unprecedented improvements despite limited resources.

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E-mail : edrugs.kmscl@kerala.gov.in,
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No.KMSCL/ED/32/2025 Date : 27.12.2025

E-TENDER NOTICE

Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers / loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the procurement of insecticides for Surveillance and Control of Communicable Diseases under plan fund for the year 2025-26.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	No. of Items
1.	KMSCL/ED/CHLORINE TAB/RC/2025/035 dtd. 27.12.2025	1
2.	KMSCL/ED/DIFLUBENZURON/RC/2025/036 dtd. 27.12.2025	1

Schedule of dates

	Date	Time
Last date of online uploading of tenders	15.01.2026	05.00pm.
Date of technical bid opening	17.01.2026	11.30 am.

Tenders shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**. **(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR** (Tender Inviting Authority)

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INBRIEF

Army expands operations to snowbound 'hideouts' in J&K

Indian Army has expanded its operational reach into higher and snowbound areas of Jammu and Kashmir to pursue terrorists seeking to exploit the harsh winter for concealment, defence sources said on Saturday. As the bone-chilling winter descends upon the Himalayas and the harshest phase of Kashmir's winter 'Chillai Kalan' (December 21 to January 31) grips the region, the Army has intensified operations across Kishtwar and Doda districts. Traditionally, the onset of 'Chillai Kalan' brings a lull in terrorist activity as communication routes shut as mountainous areas become isolated due to heavy snowfall.

BJP youth wing leader crashes car into people in M.P.; 2 killed

A leader from the BJP's youth wing ploughed into a group of people, killing an 11-year-old boy and a senior citizen, in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district, the police said on Saturday. Dipendra Bhadoria, a leader of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) who was at the wheel, was caught by people in the vicinity after the accident in Porsa on Friday night. Eyewitnesses said that the car was heading towards Jotai from Porsa when the driver, who was speeding, lost control and hit a group of people sitting around a bonfire. The accused is the BJYM's Porsa urban mandal president and was allegedly in an inebriated state at the time of the accident, they said. PTI

SC quashes rape case after convict marries complainant

The Supreme Court has quashed the conviction of a man in a rape case, noting the complainant and the convict have married each other and observed that the consensual relationship between the parties was given a criminal colour owing to a misunderstanding. A Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma said that when the matter came up, after considering the facts of the case, "we had a sixth sense that the appellant and the respondent prosecutrix could be brought together once again if they decided to marry each other". It noted the parties had married each other in July this year and had been residing together since then. PTI

Indian mission in Toronto sets up help centre for women

The Consulate-General of India in Toronto has established a one-stop centre for women, a dedicated support centre exclusively to assist Indian women in distress. The consulate has also set up a 24x7 helpline, and said the new centre aims to provide critical and timely support to Indian passport-holder women who could be facing domestic violence, abuse, family conflict, abandonment, exploitation, legal challenges, and other problems. The centre will provide coordinated, beneficiary-centred assistance by connecting aggrieved women to timely and appropriate pathways of support, the Indian mission said in a post on X. PTI

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	2	7	1	6	8	5	4	9
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6	5	9	8	4	3	2	7	1
1	3	4	7	9	2	6	5	8
7	1	2	3	8	6	4	9	5
4	9	3	5	1	7	8	6	2
8	6	5	9	2	4	3	1	7

Fake anti-rabies vaccine pulled from shelves: firm

Indian Immunologicals Ltd. issues statement in the wake of an Australian health advisory warning citizens over a counterfeit batch of Abhayrab being in circulation in India since November 1, 2023

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL), a vaccine manufacturer, on Saturday said a counterfeit batch of its human anti-rabies vaccine, Abhayrab, was no longer available on the shelves. The company's clarification comes in the wake of an Australian health advisory issued last week, warning about the counterfeit batch being in circulation in India since November 1, 2023.

Dismissing the advisory as over-cautionary and misplaced, the IIL, in a statement, said the counterfeiting involving Abhayrab batch no. KA24014 (manufacturing date: March 2024; expiry date: February 2027) was identified by early January 2025. The counterfeit batch is no longer available on the shelves, it said.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation, in its advisory, said that Australian travellers who had received Abhayrab in India after November 1, 2023, should consider the vaccination invalid and initiate a new course of vaccination.

Rabies is a viral zoonotic disease that affects the central nervous system. Once symptoms develop, it is almost always fatal. However, it can be prevented with immediate medical care after exposure.

Australia advised travellers administered with Abhayrab after November 1, 2023, to consider the vaccination invalid. AFP

In its statement, the IIL said it had been manufacturing the vaccine since 2000, with more than 210 million doses supplied across India and 40 countries, and continued to hold a 40% market share in India.

"In January 2025, IIL identified a packaging anomaly in one specific batch [Batch # KA 24014]. The company immediately notified Indian regulators and law enforcement agencies, lodged a formal complaint, and worked closely with authorities to ensure swift action," it said, adding that this was an isolated incident, and the counterfeit batch was no longer available on the shelves.

Reassuring healthcare professionals and the public, the IIL emphasised that every batch of the vaccine manufactured in India is tested and released by the Central Drugs Laboratory (Government of India) before it was made available for sale or administration.

'Safe and standard'

"Supplies made through government institutions and authorised distributors remain safe and of standard quality," said Sunil Tiwari, vice-president and head of quality management at IIL. The company has also written to the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation stating that Abhayrab, a purified cell culture-based anti-rabies vaccine, is manufactured in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements, including WHO Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and relevant pharmacopeial standards.

It added that the product is intended for use in both pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxis against rabies and has been supplied through government procurement channels as well as the private healthcare sector.

"Every batch of vaccine manufactured in India is tested and released by National Control Laboratory (Central Drugs Laboratory), which is a WHO-Geneva pre-qualified laboratory under National Regulatory Authority," it added.

Meanwhile, earlier this month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued health warnings for India and Haiti after travellers from these countries were diagnosed with rabies. It advised travellers to avoid contact with dogs, cats, and wild mammals.

Christian body slams bid to justify Assam school vandalism

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

On Wednesday, VHP and Bajrang Dal members allegedly disrupted Christmas eve celebrations at a school in Nalbari

The Assam Christian Forum (ACF) on Saturday thanked Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, the police, and the Nalbari district authorities for arresting four people involved in Christmas eve vandalism, but resented the Bharatiya Janata Party's bid to justify the "unconscionable act".

On Wednesday, members affiliated with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal allegedly disrupted Christmas eve celebrations and vandalised decorations at St. Mary's English School in Nalbari, about 65 km northwest of Guwahati.

The ACF said the incident had sown fear and insecurity among minority communities in the State. "The Christian community across Assam welcomes this decisive step toward upholding the rule of law and protecting the fundamental right to religious expression, while urging that the remaining culprits also be arrested at the earliest," the forum's spokesperson, Allen Brooks, said in a statement on Saturday.

BJP reaction criticised

However, the organisation expressed strong objection to remarks made by Assam BJP president and Lok Sabha member Dilip Saikia, who, it said, sought to justify the vandalism by alleging "constant provocation" from the Christian community and making unsubstantiated claims about religious conversions.

"Such statements, implying that the desecration of sacred preparations and religious artefacts was a response to perceived grievances, not only undermine the gravity of the crime but also risk inflaming communal tensions at a time when unity is paramount," the statement said.

Referring to constitutional guarantees, the ACF said Articles 25 and 26 ensure freedom of religion to all citizens and rejected any narrative that "portrays minority communities as provocateurs or justifies violence" in the name of cultural protection."

"Conversions, where they occur, are matters of individual conscience and lawful choice, not instruments of social discord. We urge political leaders to refrain from rhetoric that deepens divisions and instead promote dialogue and mutual respect," the statement added.

Kavach system installation on Mumbai-Delhi-Kolkata route jumps deadline again

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Having missed the second deadline of December 2025, the Railways is now hopeful of operationalising the automatic train protection system, Kavach, on routes connecting the national capital with Mumbai and Howrah sometime in 2026, with steady progress and an aggressive approach, officials said.

Kavach is an indigenously developed, highly technology-intensive system that helps maintain specified speed limits by automatically applying brakes if the loco pilot fails to do so.

According to the officials, around 25% work on these routes has been commissioned and is in ready-to-use condition, while major components for the remaining 75% have already been installed. "We are doing our level best to operationalise Kavach on the Mumbai-Delhi and Delhi-Kolkata routes, hoping to achieve it in 2026," an official said.

Kavach system helps loco pilots maintain specified speed limits by automatically applying brakes if the driver fails to do so. FILE PHOTO

The Railways Ministry on August 7, 2024, said that work to install Kavach would be completed on the said routes by March 2025. It announced the extension of the deadline from March to December 2025 on February 1, 2025, in a budget document titled "Railways estimates for Revised Estimates 2024-25 and Budget Estimates 2025-26".

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw provided an update on the progress of Kavach installation on December 17 in the Lok Sabha. "After extensive trials, Kavach Version 4.0 has been successfully commissioned on 738 route km [RKm], including the Palwal-Mathura-Nagda section [633 Rkm] on Delhi-Mumbai route and the Howrah-Bardhaman section [105 Rkm] on Delhi-Howrah route," he said.

"Optical fibre cable has been laid along 7,129 km with the installation of 800 telecom towers."

Mr. Vaishnaw added that other Kavach components, such as Station Kavach, have been installed at 860 stations, track-side equipment on 5,672 route km and Loco Kavach on 4,154 locomotives.

Centre's green panel gives its nod to Stage 2 Dulhasti hydel power project in J&K

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A panel under the Ministry of Environment has approved the 260-megawatt Dulhasti Stage 2 hydropower project on the Chenab river in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar, officials said on Saturday.

The clearance comes against the backdrop of India suspending the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack in April. The Expert Appraisal Committee on hydel projects accorded approval during its 45th meeting earlier this month, paving the way for the floating of construction tenders for the run-of-the-river project, estimated to cost over ₹3,200 crore.

According to the minutes of the meeting, the panel noted that the water of the Chenab basin is shared between India and Pakistan in accordance with provisions of the Indus Water Treaty, 1960, and the project's parameters were planned in accordance with the treaty. "However, the Indus Water Treaty stands suspended effective from April 23, 2025," the panel noted.

The run-of-the-river project over Chenab is estimated to cost over ₹3,200 crore. FILE PHOTO

When the Indus Water Treaty was in force, Pakistan had rights over the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers, and India over the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej. With the treaty now in abeyance, the Centre is pushing ahead with several hydroelectric projects in the Indus basin, such as Sawalkote, Ratle, Bursar, Pakal Dul, Kwar, Kiru, and Kirthai I and II.

Dulhasti Stage 2 is an extension of the 390-MW Dulhasti Stage I hydroelectric project (Dulhasti Power Station), which has been successfully operating since 2007 by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited.

Under the plan, water will be diverted from the Stage I power station through a separate tunnel measuring 3,685 metres in length and 8.5 metres in diameter to form a horseshoe-shaped pondage for Stage 2.

The land requirement is estimated at 60.3 hectares. This project will require 8.27 hectares of private land from two villages, in Kishtwar district.

Rajasthan expedites installation of rooftop solar power plants

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

Installation of rooftop solar power plants is being expedited in Rajasthan under the revamped distribution sector scheme (RDSS) to reduce transmission and distribution losses and improve power supply quality. Fixing meters on transformers has also been taken up rigorously under the RDSS.

The Centre's nodal agency for RDSS – the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) – reviewed the progress of work here over the weekend. REC Chairperson Jitendra Srivastava said the number of teams in the field should be increased to accelerate the metering process and action taken against the infrastructure service providers over their failure to meet targets.

State discoms' Chairperson Arti Dogra and field-level officials of the three discoms in the State attended the review meeting. Various aspects of project management, contract execution, monitoring mechanism of discoms, adherence to scheme guidelines, timely recovery of electricity dues, and timely receipt of subsidy dues were discussed.

Under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, the Centre has already released grants for 1.04 lakh consumers in Rajasthan. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Srivastava said the aggregate technical and commercial losses had decreased from 17.49% in 2021-22 – prior to the sanction of RDSS works – to 14.26% in 2024-25. Under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, applications have been received from 2.36 lakh consumers and solar modules installed for 1.15 lakh.

The Centre has already released grants for 1.04 lakh consumers in Rajasthan. Mr. Srivastava asked the field officials to create awareness on the RDSS among rural consumers and encourage citizens to avail of its benefits.

The RDSS is aimed at modernising power distribution and making it more efficient and financially stable, with focus on smart metering, infrastructure upgrades and reforms, while funding is linked to performance targets.

Ms. Dogra said the scheme of 150 units of free electricity per month was expected to become popular among consumers after the distribution of State subsidies worth ₹17,000 by the three discoms in Jaipur, Jodhpur and Ajmer.

INBRIEF

Zepto files IPO papers with SEBI to raise '₹11,000 crore'

Quick commerce unicorn Zepto filed preliminary papers with markets regulator SEBI to raise ₹11,000 crore through its initial public offering (IPO) using a confidential route, people familiar with the development said. Zepto is targeting stock market listing sometime next year, a move that could make it one of the youngest startups to debut on Indian exchanges. If it goes through, Zepto will join its rivals Zomato and Swiggy, both of which are already listed on the exchanges. PTI

NCLAT rejects insolvency plea against Jumbo Finvest

Appellate tribunal NCLAT rejected Equitas Small Finance Bank's appeal to initiate insolvency proceedings against Jumbo Finvest, upholding a National Company Law Tribunal order in the matter. Earlier, the Jaipur Bench of NCLT rejected an insolvency plea against Jumbo Finvest, observing it is a Financial Service Provider within the meaning of 3(17) of Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code and not a corporate person against whom a Section 7 application can be initiated. PTI

Aurobindo arm terminates BioFactura biosimilar pact

Aurobindo Pharma subsidiary CuraTeQ Biologics and U.S. firm BioFactura terminated agreement relating to BFI-751, a proposed biosimilar to Janssen Biotech's Stelara (Ustekinumab). The decision is aligned with CuraTeQ's strategic portfolio prioritisation and not expected to have a material impact on the firm's overall biosimilars strategy, Aurobindo Pharma said. Ustekinumab is used for treating Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, plaque psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

How India has managed to weave 'RCEP minus China'

Once the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand comes into force, India would have trade deals with all RCEP countries except China; New Delhi had refused to join the RCEP in 2019

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

A little more than six years after India stepped away from joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), India is in a position to reap the benefits such a grouping would have provided it, without exposing itself to the risks.

India and New Zealand on December 22 announced the conclusion of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Once the FTA comes into effect, India would have such FTAs with all the countries in the RCEP except for China. Trade experts say this strategy has given India market access without surrendering tariff control to China.

The RCEP countries are the 10 ASEAN members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), Australia, China, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

Free run: RCEP would have enabled indirect entry of Chinese goods via other members, says Srivastava. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Backing out of RCEP

In November 2019, just as the soon-to-be members of RCEP were about to finalise an agreement, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced India would not be a part of the grouping in its current form.

"The present form of the RCEP agreement does not fully reflect the basic spirit and the agreed guiding principles of RCEP," Mr. Modi had said at the time. "It also does not address satisfactorily India's outstanding issues and concerns. In such a situation, it is not possible for India to join the RCEP agreement."

While Mr. Modi did not expressly say it, government officials and trade experts were clear the reason India did not join the grouping was because of the apprehensions related to entering into an FTA with China. The fear was this would provide China virtually duty-free access to the Indian market.

"We could not have had an FTA with China," Pankaj Chadha, chairman of the Engineering Exports Promotion Council of India told *The Hindu*. "The reason not to sign RCEP was only China. Chinese manufacturing is far superior and competitive. I don't think it's possible to do anything except accept the fact we cannot have China in the picture when it comes to the trade deals."

'RCEP minus China'

While India already had FTAs with several RCEP members at the time, it then strategically went about concluding negotiations with the remaining members, Mr. Chadha explained. "This RCEP minus China outcome was part of the government's strategy," he said.

Ajay Srivastava, founder of the Global Trade Research Initiative and a former Director General of Foreign Trade, said that this 'RCEP minus China' strategy is a far superior one to joining RCEP itself.

"India's decision to stay out of RCEP reflects smart risk management: by signing bilateral FTAs with 14 of the 15 RCEP members and keeping China limited to a narrow APTA framework, India secures market access without surrendering tariff control."

India and China are currently signatories to the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), which is a preferential trade pact that provides lower tariffs on a few items rather than an FTA, which typically lowers most tariffs to zero.

In fact, Mr. Srivastava added, joining RCEP would have even been worse for India than signing a direct FTA with China because a bilateral deal with China would allow India to exclude sensitive sectors and pace liberalisation. On the other hand, RCEP's integrated structure would have diluted safeguards and enable indirect entry of Chinese goods via other members, he said.

"The current strategy delivers access without systemic vulnerability – and is far superior to a China-centric multilateral pact," Mr. Srivastava said.

Most of India's trade deals with the RCEP members came into effect before the Modi government came to power in 2014. However, a few key ones have been finalised since then.

'Energy storage, green hydrogen to reshape RE sector'

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Vaishali Nigam Sinha

In the next five years, technologies like energy storage and green hydrogen would fundamentally reshape India's renewable energy ecosystem, a top executive said.

"Storage will be a game changer in addressing intermittency, enabling renewables to deliver firm, dispatchable power. We are already seeing hybrid projects and battery-backed solutions provide four or more hours of reliable supply, which is critical as industrial and commercial demand rises," said Vaishali Nigam Sinha, co founder and chairperson, sustainability, ReNew Energy in an interview.

Transformative role

"Green hydrogen will play an equally transformative role, particularly in decarbonising hard-to-abate sectors such as steel, cement, fertilizers, and heavy transport," she said.

With the National Green Hydrogen Mission targeting 5 million tonne of production by 2030, supported by dedicated renewable capacity, cost would fall sharply as electrolyser manufacturing scales and renewable power becomes even more competitive.

"Together, storage and green hydrogen will help shift renewables from being perceived as variable to becoming a base load alternative, enabling round-the-clock clean power. This will significantly enhance grid stability, energy security, and India's global competitiveness in clean energy manufacturing and exports," Ms. Sinha added.

Stating India's plan to reach 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030 would require investment of around ₹30 lakh crore, she said it would be mobilised through green bonds, blended finance structures, and multilateral participation, alongside growing interest from global investors seeking long-term, stable returns.

Financing solutions

"We are also seeing increasing momentum around financing solutions for hybrid and storage-backed projects, which reduce risk and improve bankability, especially for industrial and commercial off-takers looking for round-the-clock clean power," she said.

"From a grid integration perspective, investments in green energy corridors, transmission upgrades, and battery storage systems will be critical," she added.

How India's crude oil import basket has undergone change over years

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Historically, energy security for the world's third-largest oil consumer India has been about navigating the prevailing geopolitics whilst ensuring a positive economics for purchase of crude oil purchases.

From Saudi Arabia accounting for two-thirds of our oil imports, to Russia emerging as the major supplier, New Delhi's crude oil basket has seen multiple policy shifts over the years.

West Asia sourcing

Ranjeet Mehta, CEO & Secretary General at the industry body PHDCCI, notes before 2005, over 70% of the crude oil came from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait and UAE.

"Our crude oil supplies saw a gradual broadening from 2005 to 2015 and included supplies from Nigeria and Angola in Africa and Venezuela in South America," he observed.

Tehran challenge

In June 2010, The U.N. Security Council sanctioned Iran to stop them from acquiring weapons.

In May 2011, then Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas R.P.N. Singh informed Parliament India had cut down on its Iranian purchases. Subsequently, its share in India's crude basket dropped to 6.2% in 2015-16. Sanctions on Iran were lifted in 2016. In the later years Tehran's share in India's oil imports fell to a little over 10%.

Indian refineries were "well-suited" for Russian oil.

Russian oil

The next big change in India's basket happened in 2022. Moscow's actions in Ukraine, starting February 2022, mired them in multiple sanctions from the European Union and the U.S. China and India, among the biggest oil consumers globally, however, continued to purchase Russian oil, which was now available at a discount.

While Russia accounted for less than 2% of India's crude oil imports in 2021-22, this jumped to 21.6% in 2022-23.

Thereafter, Russia's share further went up to 35.9% in 2023-24 and 35.8% in 2024-25.

At present, oil from Moscow accounts for one-third of the overall crude import basket.

As many as 30 PLI textile, apparel units start production

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

As many as 30 textile and apparel units set up under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme have commenced production.

According the Union Ministry of Textiles, of the 74 applications selected for the scheme that was notified on September 24, 2021, 40 have started investing, 22 have achieved the prescribed threshold level and 30 units have started production.

The scheme, which has an outlay of ₹10,683 crore, aims at promoting production of MMF apparel and fabrics and technical textile products. Total proposed investment by the 74 units is ₹28,711 crore and the projected turnover is ₹2,16,760 crore, generating jobs for 2.59 lakh people.

The Ministry disbursed a provisional incentive of ₹54 crore to two applicants.

The Ministry has disbursed an incentive of ₹54 crore.

IRDAI levies ₹1 crore penalty on Reliance General Insurance

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has imposed a penalty of ₹1 crore on Reliance General Insurance Company for violation of certain regulations, including those related to outsourcing of activities and payment of commission, besides corporate governance guidelines.

One of the violations pertain to engaging an individual agent of another insurer for advertising and publishing services.

"There was no transparency or clear rationale regarding how the agent was selected for this role... the insurer failed to justify their decision to engage the agent and make substantial payments," the insurance regulator said.

Disguised programmes

In its decision on four charges, IRDAI said the payments made by the insurer were essentially overriding commissions and disguised as market awareness programmes, advertising activities and customer awareness initiatives to circumvent regulations.

A remote inspection of the insurer by IRDAI in 2021 showed some violations of provisions of the Insurance Act, 1938.

University of Mysore
ESTD:1916
Viswavidyanilaya Karya Soudha, Crawford Hall, Post Box No.406 Mysore-570 005
Ph No 2419677/361 : 0821-2419363/2419301
e-mail: registrar@unl-mysore.ac.in, www.uni-mysore.ac.in
No:GL6/329(6)/2018-19 Date: 24.12.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Registrar, University of Mysore, Mysuru invites tenders for Providing of daily cleaning/safety items for 01 year as per the KTPP Act through KPPP portal of Government of Karnataka. in two cover tender system. The last date for submission of tender is **07.01.2026 up to 4:00 pm.** The Tender Indent Number **UOM/2025-26/INDOO62** details can be obtained in e-procurement website **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
Details of terms and conditions are uploaded in e-procurement portal.
For further details please contact Telephone No:0821-2419222/361.
Sd/- Registrar, University of Mysore, Mysore
DIPR/DDMYS/1433/KSMCA/817/2025-26

KARNATAKA GRAMEENA BANK
(A Scheduled Bank Established By Government of India-Sponsored by Canara Bank)
Head Office: No.32, Sangankal Road, Gandhinagar, Ballari-583103
Regional Office : MANDYA (DP Code:2506)
P.B. No. 41, 2nd Cross, Ashok Nagar, Mandya-571 401
Phone : 9743309330, 9916655510 E-mail : roman.rlw@kgbk.in

POSSESSION NOTICE [For Immovable Property]

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **Karnataka Grameena Bank, Ramanagara Branch** under the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002), and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice **Dated 15-09-2025** calling upon the borrowers: **1) Smt. Divya H G** D/o Harish Rao, **2) Sri. Harish Rao** S/o Vasudevarao, Both are Residing at House No. 47, 14th Ward, Mandipete, Ramanagara - 562159 **Guarantors: Smt. Narasubai** W/o Vasudevarao, House No. 47, 14th Ward, Mandipete, Ramanagara - 562159 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice, being **Rs.3,40,455.23/- (Rupees Three Lakhs Forty Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Five And Twenty Three Paisa Only)** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this **23rd day of December of the year 2025.**
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Karnataka Grameena Bank, Ramanagara Branch** for an amount of **Rs.3,40,455.23/- (Rupees Three Lakhs Forty Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Five And Twenty Three Paisa Only)** as on **26-08-2025** and interest thereon.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of the immovable property bearing Residential House bearing Old No. 2441, Assessment No. 81/78/1399/244/1400/2441, PID No. 14-1-10-11C, **Measuring East-West: 6.888494 meter, North-South: 4.267209 meter, Total: 29.264445 square meters** standing in the name of **Smt. Narasubai** W/o Vasudevarao, Situated at No. 11C, Nalbandavadi Road, 1st Block, Ward no. 14, Mandipete, Ramanagara. **Bounded by On the East by:** Property of K Subbayya reddy On the **West by:** Property of Nagaraju Rao, **On the North by:** Road, **On the South by:** Property of Narasubai.

Date : 23-12-2025 **Sd/- Authorized Officer**
Place : Mandya **Karnataka Grameena Bank**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Reference No. ECN-02-2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Name of work	Approx. Value
Shifting/Modification of Existing Gandipur 33KV overhead Power line crossing by 3 Core, 400 Sqmm XLPE UG Cable/Overhead lines at Railway KM No:395/500-600, near Haveri Railway Station in Chikjajur - Hubballi Section.	Rs. 1,00,10,989/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 12-01-2026**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution (Construction) Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/764/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/30 Dt: 23.12.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
[I] OHE modifications	Rs. 1,46,91,954.11/-

in connection with construction of AC Loco trip shed at Sir M. Visvesvaraya Terminal Bengaluru , [ii] Proposal for replacing Low HT shelter of PF 7&8, provision of shelter in open area between second entry building and platform entrance including granite flooring- TRD works [iii] OHE modifications in connection with Augmentation of AC Loco Trip Shed at Bengaluru [iv] Provision of OHE for pit line no.1 at Bengaluru yard.
Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 13.01.2026**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/776/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

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SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/32 Dt: 23.12.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
Conversion of tramway OHE to conventional at Bengaluru yard	Rs. 1,13,21,950.32/-

Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 13.01.2026**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/778/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/33 Dt: 23.12.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
(i)BID-OHE modification	Rs.1,31,47,138.73/-

in connection with provision of proposed Rd-06(Spur Line of 686m) with shunting neck of 650m towards SVC end duly dismantling existing Goods unloading platform adjacent to Rd-5 [ii] OHE modification for Shifting of Y TSS down line PTFE **Period of Completion 10 Months**
Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 13.01.2026**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/779/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/31 Dt: 23.12.2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
[i]OHE modification	Rs. 1,67,87,839.90/-

required for Construction of Track Machine siding at Chikkabanavara, Yediyuru, Shravanabelagola, Nelamangala station length of 420m [ii] OHE modification in connection with the proposed extension of platform BG Nagar PF-1&2 by 16 mtr, Hirisave, PF-1, 2&3 by 20 mtr, Shravanabelagola, PF-1, PF-2&3 by 138m each, Channarayapatna PF-1, 2&3 by 140 mtr and compound wall at Channarayapattana station in Assistant Divisional Engineer/Kunigal subdivision. [iii] Pending works after electrification of Chikkabanavara-Hassan (Gr296) sections of Bengaluru division. [iv] TRD works in connection with Engineering track works in Chikkabanavara-Hassan Section. [v] OHE modifications in connection with proposed construction of RUB (RCC Box size-15x4.5m) at km 14/300-400 at Nelamangala station".
Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 13.01.2026**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/777/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
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‘Even low alcohol intake raises oral cancer risk in Indian men’

Athira Elssa Johnson

Alcohol consumption, even in small amounts, significantly increases the risk of buccal mucosa cancer (BMC), a common and aggressive form of oral cancer in India, according to a large multicentre study published in *BMJ Global Health*.

The study analysed data from 1,803 men diagnosed with buccal mucosa cancer and 1,903 cancer-free controls recruited from six cancer centres across India between 2010 and 2021. Researchers assessed the impact of both internationally recognised liquors and locally brewed alcohols.

The analysis was restricted to men, as very few women in the study reported alcohol consumption, limiting reliable risk estimates among females.

After adjusting for tobacco use and other confounding factors, men who had ever consumed alcohol had a 68% higher risk of developing buccal mucosa cancer compared with non-drinkers. Importantly, even alcohol intake below nine grams per day – less than one standard drink – was also associated with a significantly increased risk.

Locally brewed liquors showed particularly elevated risks. Ever-users of country liquor had nearly double the risk of buccal mucosa cancer compared with non-drinkers, with tharra and desi daru emerging as the highest-risk beverages. Beer and whisky were also consistently associated with increased risk, even at lower levels of intake.

The study found a strong interaction between alcohol and tobacco use, especially smokeless tobacco. Men who consumed alcohol and chewed tobacco faced substantially higher risks than those exposed to either factor alone. Researchers estimate that more than 60% of buccal mucosa cancer cases in the study could be attributed to the combined use of alcohol and chewing tobacco. At the population level, alcohol consumption alone accounted for an estimated 11.3% of buccal mucosa cancer cases in India, with wide variation across States.

Buccal mucosa cancer is the most common form of oral cancer in India and has a poor five-year survival rate of about 43%. The study highlights that a substantial proportion of cases occurred in men below 45 years of age, pointing to early exposure and long-term health consequences.

The findings challenge the perception that low or ‘moderate’ drinking is safe. The authors call for integrated prevention strategies addressing alcohol and tobacco together, and for stronger regulation of locally brewed liquors, which often fall outside formal licensing and quality-control systems.

Just 5 DNA letters flip chromatin from fluid to solid-like state

Research has found that the way the genome is organised can arise from chromatin’s own physics, without needing extra instructions; by slightly changing nucleosome spacing, they were able to flip chromatin between tough state and fluid state

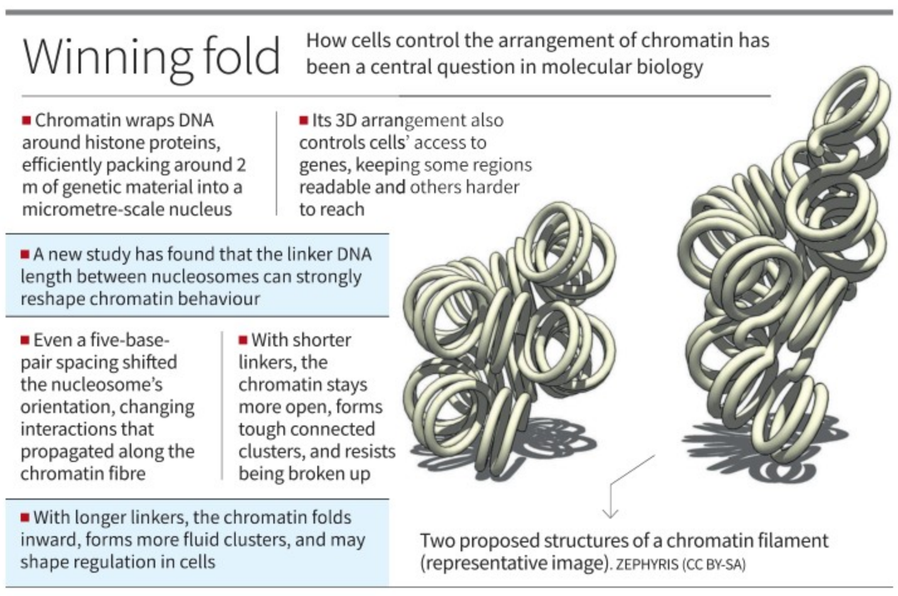
Anirban Mukhopadhyay

DNA inside human cells is not free-floating. Instead, it is tightly wrapped around small protein units forming a long chain, with DNA looping around each unit before moving on to the next. This DNA-protein complex is called chromatin and allows nearly 2 m of genetic material to fit inside a nucleus only a few micrometres wide.

However, chromatin does more than pack DNA efficiently: its arrangement influences which genes are accessible and which remain shut down. Some regions are loosely organised, allowing the cell to read genetic instructions, while others are dense and harder to access. How cells control these physical states has been a central question in molecular biology.

A new study in *Science* has now reported that a surprisingly small structural detail, the spacing between neighbouring DNA-protein units, can influence how chromatin behaves. That’s because DNA isn’t straight, UT Southwestern Medical Centre biochemistry professor and the study’s senior author Michael Rosen explained. It is twisted, so even small spacing changes can shift how protein beads sit along the DNA, reshaping the entire strand.

These bead-like proteins, called histones, are connected by short stretches of exposed DNA. In living cells, the length of this linker DNA varies naturally across the genome, differing by only a few DNA building blocks.


Winning fold
How cells control the arrangement of chromatin has been a central question in molecular biology
Chromatin wraps DNA around histone proteins, efficiently packing around 2 m of genetic material into a micrometre-scale nucleus
Its 3D arrangement also controls cells’ access to genes, keeping some regions readable and others harder to reach
A new study has found that the linker DNA length between nucleosomes can strongly reshape chromatin behaviour
Even a five-base-pair spacing shifted the nucleosome’s orientation, changing interactions that propagated along the chromatin fibre
With shorter linkers, the chromatin stays more open, forms tough connected clusters, and resists being broken up
With longer linkers, the chromatin folds inward, forms more fluid clusters, and may shape regulation in cells
Two proposed structures of a chromatin filament (representative image). ZEPHYRIS (CC BY-SA)

Because changes in orientation propagate along the chromatin fibre, Prof. Rosen added, they alter the shape of the entire molecule and how it interacts with nearby strands. These interaction differences, rather than changes in DNA sequence or protein composition, cause chromatin made from identical components to behave in very different ways.

To investigate this, the researchers built chromatin in the laboratory using identical DNA and proteins, altering only the length of the linker DNA. They compared chromatin with shorter linkers to chromatin with slightly longer ones (differing by just five DNA base pairs).

The team used rapid freezing and high-resolution imaging. Individual nucleosomes – the building blocks of chromatin – are large enough to be captured directly, allowing researchers to visualise most molecules inside the clusters. They tracked how the clusters formed, merged, moved, and broke apart.

The results revealed a clear divide. Chromatin with shorter DNA linkers remained more open along its length, positioning its units to reach outward and interact with neighbouring strands, like loosely laid yarn that easily tangles. These clusters were densely connected and mechanically resistant, fusing slowly and proving difficult to break apart.

Chromatin with longer linkers folded inward on the other hand, with units interacting more within the same strand. This reduced connections between neighbouring strands, producing clusters that were less stable, more fluid, and easier to dissolve.

“Those different interaction patterns are what make one system behave like a simple liquid and the other behave more like silly putty or toothpaste,” Prof. Rosen said.

National Institutes of Health biochemist Yamini Dalal said the study reinforces and unifies long-standing, disparate ideas using powerful interdisciplinary techniques. Chromatin has long been understood as a self-organising structure, she said, with nucleosome spacing strongly influencing how it folds.

“The genome’s organisation is encoded in the chromatin itself. You don’t need additional instructions to make structure emerge.”

When the researchers examined human and mouse cells, they found dense chromatin regions with packing patterns similar to those seen in laboratory experiments. Prof. Rosen suggested this shows that the same physical rules apply inside the nucleus as in the test tube, although whether cells actively use this feature to regulate chromatin function remains an open question.

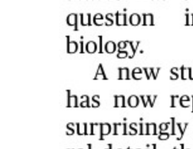
Dr. Dalal agreed that the physics demonstrated is biologically realistic but cautioned against assuming that cells fine-tune this spacing everywhere. Maintaining exact five-base-pair differences across a dynamic chromatin would be difficult, she said. Such effects may matter most in highly ordered genomic regions, such as repetitive DNA, where even small disruptions could alter how easily regulatory molecules move through and access DNA.

Disorder in chromatin’s repetitive DNA stretches is already linked to genome instability in cancer and ageing. Dr. Dalal viewed the findings as a physical blueprint for understanding these fragilities.

From a gene function standpoint as well, the study is provocative. Sarah Teichmann, Cambridge University professor and co-founder of the international Human Cell Atlas project, said the results raise the possibility that chromatin’s physical state could influence how genes are regulated across different cell types. Large efforts such as the Human Cell Atlas, which map molecular differences between cells, could eventually test whether such physical chromatin states vary with cell identity, she said.

Anirban Mukhopadhyay is a geneticist by training and science communicator from New Delhi.

Twenty-first century solutions to snake bites



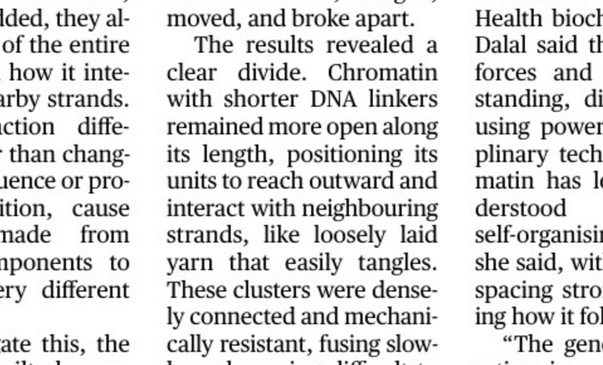
SPEAKING OF SCIENCE
D. Balasubramanian

As India has progressed, the stereotyped image of the “land of snake charmers” has been left behind. We now have snake rescuers. However, in rural areas, snakebites still account for 58,000 deaths every year, affecting workers in paddy fields as much as subsistence farmers in dry landscapes.

Snake venoms generally cause three types of damage: blood disorders, muscle paralysis, and tissue death. Viper bites commonly cause blood-related disorders, while elapid snakes (like cobras) typically trigger nerve-related paralysis.

A standard antivenom has been designed against the venom of India’s ‘Big Four’ species: spectacled cobra, common krait, Russell’s viper, and saw-scaled viper. Venom from these snakes is needed for making this antivenom. Most of India’s requirement of snake venom is met by snakes captured in paddy fields and the scrublands of Tamil Nadu by tribals of the Irula Snake Catcher’s Industrial Co-operative Society.

A cocktail of venoms from the four species is injected into horses in non-lethal doses, and the animals are hyper-immunised by repeated injections. Horses are chosen because they are large animals and are easy to handle. Their immune system reacts, producing antibodies in large quantities. When ready, blood is drawn from the horses. Plasma containing the antibodies is processed to isolate toxin-binding antibody fragments, which are then tested, freeze-dried, and distributed in vials.


Spectacled cobra, one of the ‘Big Four’ species. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

This method has been in practice since the 1950s, and has several limitations. India has over 60 venomous snake species. Snakes from different geographical regions have different toxin constituents in their venom, even within the same species. The ‘Big Four’ antivenom is not quite up to the task in many scenarios. This has driven research towards creating a therapy that is specific to a region or is universally effective.

Recent findings (*Nature* 647, 716, 2025) have taken us closer to a broad-spectrum treatment for snake bites. A Danish laboratory along with international collaborators focused on snakes in sub-Saharan Africa, where snakebites lead to 10,000 amputations every year. The researchers collected venom from the 18 snake species of the region that are medically important (including cobras and mambas) and injected the mix into an alpaca and a llama. These animals are related to camels and are native to South America. The camel family was chosen because it has unusual antibodies that yield small, stable fragments called nanobodies. A strong immune response is generated to the injected toxins, providing a potent source of highly effective neutralisers. At this stage, B cells that produce antibodies are collected from the blood. The DNA that codes for the nanobodies is genetically engineered into the genome of bacteriophage viruses. The virus particles express nanobodies on their surface. The nanobodies that bind most strongly to snake venom toxins are selected. These nanobodies can now be mass-produced cheaply in bacteria, instead of in horses. In experiments performed on mice, strong antivenom activity was observed against 17 of the 18 snakes whose venoms were included in the study.

Coming to Indian snakes: researchers at the National Research Centre on Camel at Bikaner in Rajasthan have shown that antivenom generated in camels is able to neutralise the effects of venom from Sochurek’s saw-scaled viper, which is found in this region (*Toxicon* 134, 1, 2017). Expanding this to other medically important snake species will help in tackling what the World Health Organisation has classified as a neglected tropical disease.

The article was written in collaboration with Sushil Chandani

SNAPSHOTS

Microrobot is a macro leap towards robot swarms

Scientists have built a robot smaller than a grain of dust with onboard electronics. The device is made with chip-making methods, so many robots can be built at once. It’s powered and reprogrammed with light: one LED provides energy to solar cells and another sends code, which the robot stores in memory and executes. It also measures temperature and senses its way towards warmer regions. The team has pitched it as a step towards practical robot swarms.

Warming driving butterflies and their plants apart

Global warming is pushing butterflies towards higher elevations yet their caterpillars can only survive where the right host plants grow. Based on studying 24 tropical Asian butterflies, researchers projected suitable habitat in a high-emissions scenario and found that by 2090, 17 species could lose shared habitat with their host plants. Mountain species are projected to lose more than lowland species. The results suggest that protecting host plants in cooler refuges could help some populations persist.

Sanctions push Russian plan to revive Soviet site

Russia is planning to revive an unfinished Soviet-era particle accelerator near Moscow in a bid to be self-sufficient following sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine. The Kurchatov Institute has issued a 177-million-ruble contract to this end. The ‘UNK’ machine was planned as a 600-GeV proton accelerator and storage complex with designs that could later reach 3 TeV. The project was halted in the 1990s but its civil works remain, including a 21-km-long underground ring tunnel.

Question Corner

Harmless bumps

Why do we get goosebumps?

Goosebumps, scientifically known as piloerection, occur when tiny muscles called arrector pili contract at the base of hair follicles. This pulls the hairs upright, creating the little harmless bumps on the skin.

The response is controlled by the sympathetic nervous system, a branch of the autonomic nervous system that automatically regulates involuntary bodily reactions. It activates during cold exposure, fear or strong emotions such as awe, excitement, and inspiration.

In furry animals, piloerection has clear functions. Raised hairs trap air to improve insulation in the cold or make the animal appear larger and more threatening to predators. Humans inherited this reflex from hairier ancestors, but with little body hair left, it no longer serves a useful function. Goosebumps often appear in waves because nerves activate arrector pili muscles in coordinated clusters, sending signals along neighbouring fibres and creating a rippling pattern across the skin rather than isolated bumps.

Readers may send their questions / answers to science@thehindu.co.in

What are the signals from the Indian economy?

What measures have the government taken to boost demand and growth?

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

The story so far:
The year 2025 has been rocky for the Indian economy. While the government has implemented several policy changes that are positive for the economy, several other factors, some international and some domestic, continue to play spoilsport.

What has gone well in the year?
The year began on a reasonably positive footing. In February, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump jointly announced that the two countries would work towards a Bilateral Trade Agreement by the fall of this year.

That same month, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also presented Budget 2025, in which she implemented several changes to the income tax rates and slabs that would essentially reduce the tax burden on the bulk of taxpayers.

While the Budget announcement was aimed at increasing disposable incomes by reducing the tax on incomes, September saw the GST Council approach the problem from another direction. The Council did away with the 12% and 28% GST slabs and moved most items in each of the discarded slabs to the ones immediately below them. That is, most items in the 12% slab moved to 5%, and most items in 28% moved to 18%.

Apart from this, the Centre in November also announced the implementation of the four Labour Codes, which increase social security for workers and provide them with various benefits.

Trade talks between the U.S. and India have resumed, but nothing concrete has been announced

What trade deals have been struck or implemented this year?
The India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement was signed in July 2025, under which India is to receive duty-free access to most of the U.K. market, and enhanced provisions for the mobility of Indian labour in that country.

The Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement between India and the European Free Trade Association (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein), signed in March 2024, officially came into effect on October 1, 2025. Apart from the trade concessions, the EFTA countries agreed to invest $100 billion in India in 15 years. In an interview to *The Hindu*, Iceland's Ambassador to India Benedikt Höskuldsson asserted that the $100 billion target would be achieved well before the 15 years were completed.

In December, India and Oman signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), and India and New Zealand also announced that they had concluded negotiations on a free trade agreement, under which India would receive duty-free access for 100% of the items it exports to New Zealand. Further, New Zealand has committed to invest $20 billion in India over 15 years.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has recently been asserting that India's negotiations with the European Union over a trade deal are in their final stages.

What did not work in 2025?
The biggest factor that has worked against India has been the U.S. After the initial bonhomie of the February announcement, Mr. Trump announced "Liberation Day" reciprocal tariffs on a number of countries, including India, in April. India's tariff was 26% at the time; a week or so later, Mr. Trump announced a 90-day "pause" on the tariffs so he could negotiate bilateral trade deals. But neither side could agree on several key aspects.

As the 90-day deadline approached in early July, Mr. Trump extended the deadline to the end of that month. However, with no deal forthcoming with India, on July 31, Mr. Trump announced 25% tariffs on India. A week later, he announced an additional 25% tariff on India as a "penalty" for importing Russian oil. The total tariff amounted to an unsustainable 50%, and that's when trade talks really broke down.

Talks have resumed, but nothing concrete has been announced. Several labour-intensive sectors in India, for which the U.S. is a big market, have been hurting.

The government has announced an Export Promotion Mission to provide cheaper credit to exporters and help them overcome non-tariff barriers, but details of the schemes have not yet been made public.

What lies ahead?
The New Year is going to be a mixed bag for the economy. The Reserve Bank of India has pegged growth for 2025-26 at 7.3%. This means growth in the second half will slow down significantly since the first half averaged 8%. The tariff troubles also look like they could continue for a few more months.

On the other hand, the positive thing to look out for is a much-needed upgrade of India's macroeconomic data indicators. The GDP, Index of Industrial Production, and Consumer Price Index – all three vital to gauge the health of the economy – will see their base years updated with improved methodologies.

What are India's diplomatic headwinds ahead?

Why has foreign policy in 2025 been full of 'shock and surprise'? Where does India stand in its ties with the U.S.? Will issues over tariffs, visas and immigration persist in the New Year? How troubling is the neighbourhood turmoil, particularly in Pakistan and Bangladesh?

Suhasini Haidar

The story so far:
In many ways, the spirit of 2025 for Indian foreign policy was "shock and surprise", as the Narendra Modi government encountered several unexpected international challenges from a number of directions.

Which were the biggest global stories for India this year?
There's no doubt that the most significant foreign policy story of the year came from Washington, where Donald Trump was sworn in as President for his second term in January. Mr. Trump's policies have rocked the multilateral economic system with his "Liberation Day" tariffs which destabilised the world order. With his altered policies on Russia and China, Mr. Trump rattled America's closest alliances in Europe and the Indo-Pacific. He also took global discourse to a new low with his high-handed treatment of world leaders, even as he has commanded obsequiousness from them in his quest for the Nobel Prize for "resolving eight wars".

While the U.S. election had the biggest impact, the rise of ultra-right politicians from European Parliament elections to Japan and Chile augured a growing conservative and xenophobic trend. Meanwhile, oil prices have dropped due to a glut in production by OPEC countries, indicating some worrying trends for the renewable energy push to combat climate change.

The Russian war in Ukraine continued for a fourth year, but for the first time, India had to face severe economic consequences for buying Russian oil, with EU and U.K. sanctions on Indian-Russian joint venture Nayara Energy, and U.S. sanctions on Russian oil majors.

The altered worldview of the U.S. has been acutely felt in South Block

Shifting ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House in Washington, DC. FILE PHOTO

The Israeli strikes on Gaza continued, with over 70,000 killed, but an American-backed ceasefire deal at the end of the year held out some hope. India's plans for the India-Middle East Economic Corridor, however, are at a standstill, and the Modi government's refusal to criticise Israel for strikes on Iran in June led to awkward moments at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS grouping, where Iran is a member. Closer home, turmoil in the region continued, with a conflict with Pakistan, Gen-Z protests in Nepal toppling the government, and mob violence in Bangladesh turning anti-India after the killing of a right-wing leader, putting a question mark over the efficacy of India's "Neighbourhood First" policy.

What made the Trump challenge most difficult?
The U.S.'s altered worldview was felt acutely in South Block, where the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is headquartered, as the anticipation that Mr. Trump would run a pro-India foreign policy was cut short by his actions. Mr. Trump first slapped the highest 25% tariffs and 25% surcharge on India for buying Russian oil. His crackdown on immigration, H-1B visas, student visas and the deportation of Indian illegals led to criticism of the MEA in India. Mr. Trump's repeated claims that he had mediated the ceasefire of Operation Sindoor, hosting the Pakistani leadership at the White House and clearing F-16 supplies damaged New Delhi's campaign against cross-border terrorism from Pakistan. The perception that Indian diplomacy failed during the conflict led to strains with Turkiye, Azerbaijan and Malaysia that were seen as supporting Pakistan. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has been criticised for the downturn in India-U.S. ties.

What were the diplomatic successes of 2025?
Indian diplomacy racked up some notable successes, including a turnaround in ties with Canada, which had spiralled since 2023 over allegations that India oversaw the assassination of a Khalistani separatist there. Mr. Modi visited Canada to attend the G-7 outreach and agreed with the new Canadian Prime Minister, Mark Carney, to set aside their differences.

An unusual foray was made with the Taliban. After a meeting between the Foreign Secretary and Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in early 2025, relations quickly improved, and Mr. Jaishankar accorded full national honours and a warm welcome to Mr. Muttaqi in Delhi in October. Both sides moved past the embarrassment of a men-only press meet by the Taliban leader after Mr. Muttaqi held a more inclusive second press conference, but the government will have to contend with allegations that it is improving ties with Afghanistan by appeasing the restrictive and brutal anti-women regime. The downturn in Afghan-Pakistan ties and their bitter conflict, however, was a boost for Indian strategists as Pakistan faced the "two-front" problem, which India normally faces with China and Pakistan.

With Beijing, New Delhi kept up the rapprochement process begun when Mr. Modi and President Xi Jinping met in October 2024, reopening the Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage, restoring visas and flights between the two countries, and so on. Despite China's strong diplomatic and military support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, Mr. Modi, Mr. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval made visits to China to attend the SCO meetings. New Delhi strengthened ties with Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, all of which Mr. Modi visited in 2025. India's support to Sri Lanka after Cyclone Ditwah was particularly appreciated, as was its aid of $450 million.

What is expected in 2026?
Diplomats and trade negotiators spent much of 2025 working on bilateral trade agreements, of which the BTAs with the U.K., Oman and New Zealand were sealed. But the larger deals, with the U.S., the EU, Australia, EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union), GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), ASEAN and others are still pending, and they expect to have some breakthroughs at the beginning of 2026.

In January, EU Commission and Council Presidents Ursula Von Der Leyen and Antonio Costa are expected to be the guests for Republic Day, when the India-EU free trade agreement is expected to be finalised. New Delhi will follow the results of elections in Myanmar (December 28), Bangladesh (February 12) and Nepal (March 5) closely, each of which has implications for South Block. In February, India will host the Artificial Intelligence Summit, where more than a dozen international leaders are expected, including French President Emmanuel Macron, and in March, Canadian PM Carney is expected to make a visit to discuss trade, critical minerals and nuclear energy.

All eyes are on whether Mr. Trump will finally travel to India for the Quad Summit, which New Delhi has been unable to host for two years, and on his visit to China, possibly for the APEC summit. Later in the year, leaders of BRICS, including Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi, will be invited to the BRICS Summit. Mr. Modi will be invited to the G-20 Summit on a Trump property in Miami in December, just after key mid-term elections in the U.S. After a year of geopolitical turmoil in 2025, Indian foreign policy makers will hope for a New Year of fewer surprises, and a more realistic and tempered assessment of India's diplomatic options is in order.

Is the 'health for all' campaign on track?

What are India's challenges on the health front? What does it need to do on funding? Why is there a growing resistance to antibiotics? Why did India fail to reach its goals on ending tuberculosis? What does the pharmaceutical industry need to do on quality control?

Ramya Kannan

The story so far:
With a population of 146 crore, India's health challenges are growing too. It already faces an avalanche of non-communicable diseases, resurgent infectious diseases, climate change-related issues, concerns relating to quality control in the burgeoning pharmaceutical industry, and funding for health care. As India gears up for health emergencies, it needs to prioritise and realign areas of care and attention to ensure health for all.

Why is there a funding deficit?
Early in 2025, Donald Trump's presidency brought with it the withdrawal of the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO) and consequent withdrawal of funds for various health and development projects. The move affected India too – a beneficiary of the PEPFAR (U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) and USAID – as funds suddenly dried up for certain key health intervention projects in the fields of HIV/AIDS, population services and maternal and child health. The government said USAID committed $97 million in funds for seven projects, only part of a total budget of approximately $750 million allocated across all projects.

The Union and State governments have had to make good this funding deficit.

One of the most pressing issues of the year was the lack of quality control in pharma products such as cough syrups

Matter of discussion: Twenty-five children died in Madhya Pradesh after consuming prescription cough syrup. REUTERS

What about budgetary allocation?
India's health budget has remained below 2% of the GDP, while the clamour to increase funding grows louder each year. A sum of ₹99,859 crore was allocated for various health projects in the 2025-26 fiscal year, an 11% rise from the previous year's, and it is yet to hit the sweet spot of over 2% of the GDP. In fact, the National Health Policy itself set a target of 2.5% of GDP. Unless this is achieved, it is unlikely that India can achieve the larger goal of health for all. The 'health for all' movement has been gaining momentum over the years. While the post-pandemic years have brought health closer to the people, in terms of diagnostic labs and the number of beds, a huge gulf remains between demand and supply in funding and infrastructure.

What are some of the pressing concerns?
The chronic inadequacy of funding leaves one wondering if the health system will be able to handle the resurgence of several infectious diseases effectively enough to bring down the deaths and improve morbidity. In addition, the country now faces abysmal air quality issues. Unless India takes a leaf from the China playbook and finds solutions to remedy air quality like in Beijing, further deterioration is assured.

Why did India miss the TB elimination goal?
India advanced the global target for achieving the elimination of tuberculosis by two years and reassigned 2025 as the year it would eliminate tuberculosis. However, that remains a pipe dream, though several advancements have been made over the years, particularly in terms of diagnosis, and more recently, drug regimens too. There are now sophisticated home-grown molecular tests such as TrueNat. The deployment of these machines across the country has not only enabled the speedy detection of the mycobacterium infection, but also drug resistance. However, the growing number of cases of multidrug-resistant TB and extensively drug resistant TB continues to be a cause for worry.

Why is AMR a cause for worry?
The larger issue of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is of immediate concern in India. The WHO's recent GLASS report noted that one in three people who had bacterial infections in India bore resistant organisms, against one in six globally. For India, the report flagged high resistance rates to major antibiotics, especially in serious infections such as those caused by *E.coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*, particularly in hospital ICUs. The challenging factors that aggravate AMR are widespread over-the-counter antibiotic access, self-medication, incomplete courses, environmental contamination, and uneven enforcement of regulations. Notably, Kerala is the only State where stewardship in AMR has led to an actual lowering of AMR levels in the community; others need to catch up, even as they roll out the second iteration of the National Plan of Action on Antimicrobial Resistance introduced this year.

Why does India need to address its pharma quality issues?
The most pressing issue of the year was reserved for the last quarter. In all, 25 children died in Madhya Pradesh after consuming prescription cough syrup. A lab analysis revealed that the cough syrup, manufactured in Tamil Nadu, contained an industrial chemical, diethylene glycol, known to cause kidney and liver failure. While regulatory action was stepped up, many questions remain. Did the quality control mechanism embedded into the system fail? Are there other cases where poor quality, even poisonous drugs, have managed to skip past the regulator?

India, which is on a Make-in-India trajectory, will scarcely move ahead unless it gets a hold of quality, before it realises its 'pharmacy of the world' goal. The sad fact is that India's cough syrups have always tussled with quality issues, with 70 children dying in The Gambia, Africa, after using cough syrups, four of them manufactured in India. Subsequent probes have revealed certain quality issues; that they continue to strike periodically, taking lives and reducing the quality of life of patients, is a statement on the pharma quality regulatory framework of the country.

The coming year will hopefully see India wrestle with contentious issues in the health care sector and overcome at least some of the glitches that threaten mortality and morbidity.

PROFILES

The 'prince' who came in from the cold

Tarique Rahman

The acting chairman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, who returned to the country from a self-imposed exile in London, sends a message of inclusion as the nation, rocked by protests and mob violence, is preparing for its first post-Hasina elections

Kallol Bhattacherjee

Stepping out of the wood-panelled VVIP arrival lounge of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on December 25, Tarique Rahman, the acting chairman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), walked to a small grassy patch beside the car park, took off his shoes, and stepped onto the ground. It was a gesture signalling that he had reconnected with the land of his birth and finally secured the political launch that was denied to him when Bangladesh spiralled into political uncertainty in late 2006, preventing him from contesting his first parliamentary election. In his speech after returning from London, Mr. Rahman struck an inclusive tone, calling for inter-communal and inter-ethnic harmony in Bangladesh, and, with an eye on his political enemies, set about dismantling some of the allegations levelled against the BNP by its opponents.

From 2009 to 2024, Sheikh Hasina had repeatedly described the BNP and Mr. Rahman's mother, Khaleda Zia, as pro-Pakistan. In his speech at the July 36 Expressway, Mr. Rahman invoked the BNP's links to the 1971 Liberation War and the political developments of November 7, 1971 that brought his father, the late Gen. Ziaur Rahman, to *de facto* power. In doing so, Mr. Rahman signalled that, much like Ms. Hasina's reliance on the legacy of her father, he too would build his political narrative around the legend of his father. Gen. Ziaur Rahman began his career as a soldier in the Pakistan Army and fought against India in the 1965 war, and later defected from the Pakistani military to declare the independence of East Pakistan hours after the Pakistan military launched Operation Searchlight on March 25, 1971.

Through his speech and subsequent messages, Mr. Rahman has signalled that this time, he had come ready with an alternative vision for Bangladesh – one in which the previous regime's iconography would be challenged by the icons of the BNP.

The massive crowds that greeted him on December 25 and 26 might have given him a grand welcome, but Mr. Rahman was quickly reminded of the perils of Bangladeshi politics. Jamaat-e-Islami chief Shafiqur Rahman said his party, the country's largest Islamist party, would "keep an eye" on Mr. Rahman. The remark was particularly significant because by emphasising inclusion, Mr. Rahman had conveyed that this time, unlike his last stint that ended in 2007, he intended to pursue a different trajectory.

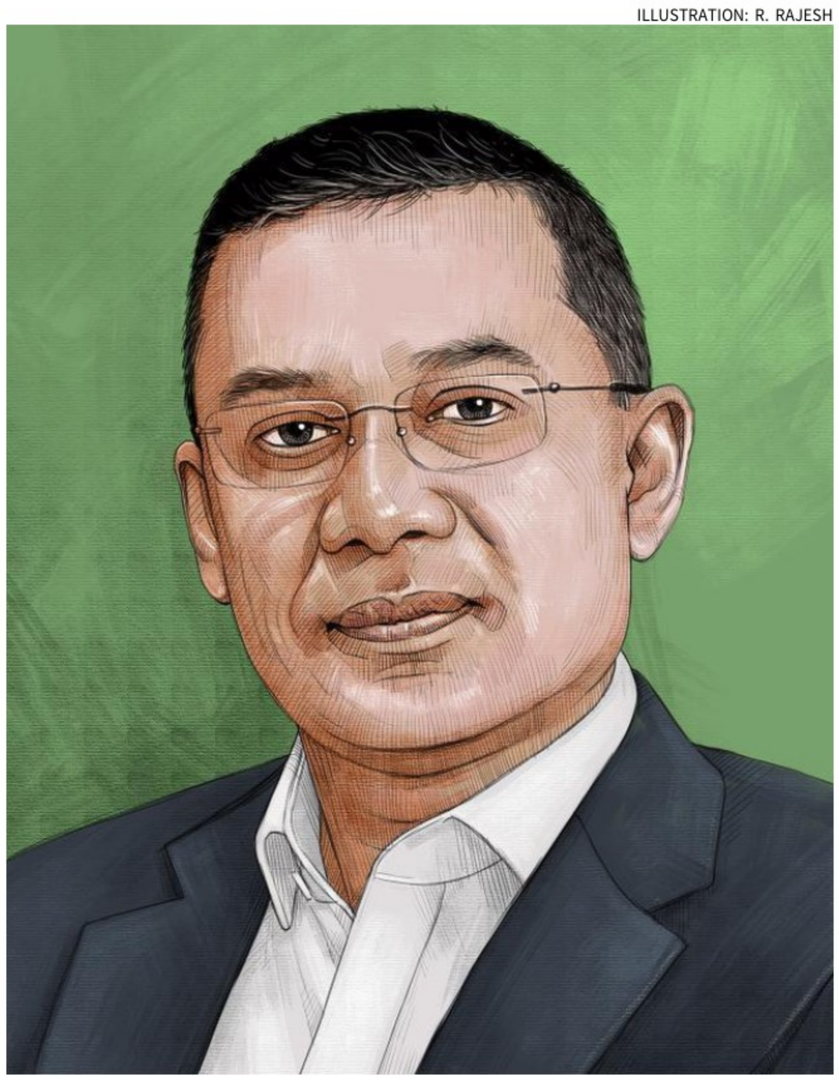
Political trajectory

The political journey of Mr. Rahman was shaped by the traumatic memories of his childhood. On May 29, 1981, when he was in his teens, his father left for the port city of Chittagong for an unscheduled visit. A day later, he was shot and killed in an attempted coup that lasted only three days. After the assassination of Gen. Zia, the BNP was energetically led by Khaleda Zia, who often wore white and joined hands with her arch enemy, Sheikh Hasina, to challenge the military dictator, Hossein Mohammed Ershad. Ms. Zia went on to become Bangladesh's first woman Prime Minister in 1991. Mr. Rahman started his formal political journey on June 22, 2002 when the BNP appointed him its 1st joint secretary.

During this period, Mr. Rahman earned a name for himself that found mention in U.S. Embassy cables from Dhaka, later released by WikiLeaks in 2005. Ms. Zia's return to power coincided with the U.S. war on terror, centred on the Af-Pak region but with far-reaching consequences for South Asia. Amid several legacy security issues, the BNP was accused of hosting the leadership of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) in Dhaka, which gave Bangladesh-India relations under Khaleda Zia a strained reputation.

More serious, however, were allegations of links between some senior BNP figures and the extremist Jamaatul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB), led by Bangla Bhai. While the JMB was designated a terrorist organisation internationally, Ms. Zia refused to acknowledge the links between party leaders and the terror group. One U.S. Embassy cable referred to Mr. Rahman's "steely nerves" for which he was being recognised inside the party and dubbed him "The Dark Prince". "Tarique Rahman has the Zia name, political cunning," one cable noted, describing him as a "uniquely polarizing figure in Bangladeshi politics" and "ruthless". The U.S. Embassy predicted that Mr. Rahman was getting ready to contest the 2007 election, but cautioned that he would not command broad support within the party if Ms. Zia pressed too hard for her son to emerge as the next Prime Minister.

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



Mr. Rahman's career plans were disrupted on January 11, 2007 when the army-backed interim government of President Iajuddin Ahmed declared emergency in Bangladesh. The emergency launched a major anti-corruption drive that targeted both Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia. It was, however, the treatment of Mr. Rahman by the officials that generated sympathy for him.

In 2009, during a meeting with a foreign diplomat in his London flat, Mr. Rahman said he had been tortured in custody, leaving him with a spinal injury that required prolonged medical treatment. Thereafter, he remained largely confined to London, looking after the BNP's activities in the U.K., addressing supporters via video link and engaging with foreign diplomats and visiting politicians from his home. As Ms. Zia's health declined, Mr. Rahman's position within the party became increasingly clear, a status further consolidated by his backing of the BNP's boycott of the 2014, 2018, and 2024 elections. The party insisted that polls be held under a caretaker government, accusing the Hasina regime of bias.

Key player

The welcome given to him has ensured that Mr. Rahman will be a major player, and possibly the prime ministerial candidate, in the next election. That prominence has also heightened his internal vulnerabilities and drawn greater attention from abroad. Ahead of his arrival, parties such as Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party had held rallies across the country. Yet, the scale of the crowds Mr. Rahman drew for his meetings at the July 36 Expressway, the Shaheed Minar and at the Sharif Osman Hadi memorial at the Dhaka University, has made those previous rallies pale in comparison.

His arrival has already shaken the established political equations in Bangladesh. The NCP's Arshadul Haque resigned soon after Rahman's arrival, citing his discomfort with its seat-sharing talks with Jamaat, and went on to endorse Mr. Rahman for his inclusive approach.

At the same time, friction has rocked the eight-party Islamist coalition over seat-sharing arrangements. Reports from Dhaka suggest that attacks by Islamist mobs – from the burning of newspaper offices to assaults on prominent cultural institutions such as Chhayanaut – have triggered a drift of leaders and voters towards the BNP.

However, it remains to be seen if Mr. Rahman can hold on to the momentum and turn it into a decisive victory.

THE GIST

- Tarique Rahman started his formal political journey on June 22, 2002, when the BNP appointed him its first joint secretary
- As Khaleda Zia's health declined, Rahman's position within the party became increasingly clear, a status which was further consolidated by his backing of the BNP's boycott of the 2014, 2018, and 2024 elections
- In his speech after returning to Bangladesh, Rahman called for inter-communal and inter-ethnic harmony in Bangladesh, and set about dismantling some of the allegations levelled against the BNP by its opponents

Saffron entry

V.V. Rajesh

The BJP, which won its first Corporation election in Kerala, has chosen a familiar local face to be the Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram

S.R. Praveen

Back in 2020, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was confident of capturing power at the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, ruled by the Left Democratic Front for around four decades. The confidence was built on their performance in the previous elections in 2015, when they increased their seats from a mere six to 35 in the 100-member council. To make clear their intent, the party had fielded V.V. Rajesh, one of its prominent faces in the State, and projected him as a possible Mayor candidate.

Though Mr. Rajesh won that election, the BJP failed to improve its standing, almost staying static at 34 seats. Five years later, the BJP finally came on top, winning 50 seats, just one short of the majority figure. It also became the first ever win in a Corporation in Kerala for the party.

The BJP campaign focused on the development of Thiruvananthapuram, offering to place a blueprint in just 45 days of assuming office, as announced by BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar during electioneering. Mr. Rajesh was just one among the many contenders for the Mayor's post, most prominent among them being R. Sreelekha, former Director-General of Police, who joined the BJP in 2024.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

Until a day before the mayoral election on December 26, Ms. Sreelekha was strongly tipped to take over. However, the scales tipped in favour of Mr. Rajesh at the last minute as a section of the BJP leadership stood firm for him, considering his long years of experience in building the party at the grassroots level in the district. Though Ms. Sreelekha made her displeasure public, especially by leaving the council hall in a huff soon after the swearing in, the ever-diplomatic Mr. Rajesh was quick to mollify her by visiting her at her residence.

Born in 1975 in Nedumangad, a suburban town in Thiruvananthapuram district, Mr. Rajesh began his political life as a student activist of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). By the time he completed his law studies, he had moved up to State- and national-level positions in the organisation. The natural progression was to the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, the BJP's youth organisation, of which he became the State President. Later, he became the Thiruvananthapuram district president and State secretary of the BJP.

Unsuccessful foray

Though his forays in the Assembly elections have been unsuccessful, he has improved the tally on all the three occasions he contested. In 2021, he came second with 28.77% votes in the Vattiyurkavu Assembly constituency, where he was placed third in 2011 with 11.98% votes. In Nedumangad in 2016, he managed to increase the BJP's votes from 1,255 in the previous election to 35,139, though he ended up third.

Right from the early days, he has been an active presence in the BJP's protests in the capital, especially the one against the Supreme Court verdict allowing the entry of women of menstruating age into Sabarimala. The BJP frequently deployed him for television debates. However, during his stint as a councillor in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation in the past five years, his continued absence from council meetings had even become a point of debate in the council. He has sat for only a handful of meetings, though the council meets twice every month.

The BJP has attempted to portray the victory in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation as a crucial opening to capturing power in Kerala in the upcoming Assembly election. However, the local body election results overall paint a bleaker picture for the party, which witnessed its vote share fall from 19.26% in 2020 to 14.76% now. It has also been unable to make any headway in the district panchayats, spread out over rural belts.

Considering this reality, the BJP's central leadership is expected to push for projects worth showcasing in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation. Soon after taking charge, Mr. Rajesh said the capital would be transformed into one of the three most developed cities of the country in the next five years.

The BJP is coming to power at a time when the capital's developmental trajectory is primed to take off on the wings of the Vizhinjam port. The party's growth will depend a lot on how Mr. Rajesh handles the powerful position he has just taken charge of.

Angry tide in Honduras

Nasry Asfura

The construction magnate from the right-wing National Party, who was endorsed by U.S. President Donald Trump, clinched a narrow victory in the Latin American nation

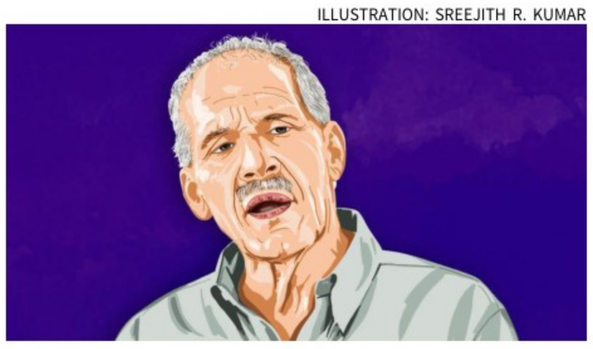
Srinivasan Ramani

Nasry Asfura, a 67-year-old construction magnate and former Mayor of Honduras's capital, Tegucigalpa, has emerged as the president-elect of the country after a long-drawn-out and contentious electoral process. Mr. Asfura, representing the National Party of Honduras (PNH), won 40.27% of the vote against 39.53% for Salvador Nasralla of the Liberal Party with a narrow margin of just 28,000 votes. The victory followed weeks of delayed vote counting, attributed to the country's difficult topography, which slowed the counting of the rural ballots. These two parties have traditionally dominated Honduran politics, forming a long-standing two-party system that was only briefly interrupted, such as by the outgoing tenure of the left-wing LIBRE party's Xiomara Castro.

Mr. Asfura's chances were significantly boosted when U.S. President Donald Trump explicitly endorsed him days before the November 30 election, coupled with threats to cut American aid if anyone other than Mr. Asfura won.

Mr. Trump's endorsement, in which he called Mr. Asfura someone he could work with to tackle "narcocommunists", was followed by his pardoning of former President Juan Orlando Hernández just two days before the election. Mr. Hernández, who also belonged to Mr. Asfura's PNH, had been convicted in U.S. courts and was serving a 45-year prison sentence for accepting millions in bribes to protect cocaine shipments. This move making clear who was his favourite in Honduras pointed to a striking irony. Mr. Trump has announced a naval blockade on Venezuela targeting President Nicolás Maduro, whom he claims, without proof, to be heading a narcotics network, while releasing a known drug trafficker in Mr. Hernández, convicted by the U.S. justice system.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR



These actions are an extension of a subtler pro-oligarchic position taken by the U.S. since the coup in 2009 that deposed popularly elected President José Manuel Zelaya. Then, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had supported the coup-installed interim government, refusing to classify the military action as a "coup", which would have triggered suspension of American aid.

Mr. Asfura's victory is a major boost for the oligarchy, which includes a wealthy elite from influential families of Syrian and Palestinian descent who migrated to the country in the 20th century (and includes both the right-wing candidates in Mr. Asfura and Mr. Nasralla) and have maintained a strong grip over economic and political power.

During his tenure as Mayor, Mr. Asfura was indicted in 2020 on charges of embezzling public funds, money laundering, fraud, and abuse of authority. He was also named in the 2021 Pandora Papers for operating offshore companies while serving as a public official. These charges were controversially dismissed by the Supreme Court on December 15, just nine days before his official victory declaration.

'Narco state'

During Mr. Hernández's regime between 2014 and 2022, Honduras effectively transformed into a "narco-state" with a nexus among the public sector, the oligarchy, and drug smuggling networks mediated by the President himself. During this administration, corruption and political murders were rampant, even as poverty increased and economic mismanagement resulted in thousands fleeing the country.

Ms. Castro worked towards closer ties with Cuba and Venezuela and ended Honduran recognition of Taiwan to foster ties with Beijing. These moves created tensions with the U.S. following Mr. Trump's return to power, forcing Ms. Castro to adopt pragmatic policies in favour of the existing power structures and also cooperation with the U.S. on migration control policies and its corporate interests in Honduras.

Mr. Nasralla was himself a former ally of Ms. Castro but contested on a right-wing platform against Mr. Asfura, but Mr. Trump's overt support for the ex-Mayor helped him sail through, thanks to the fear of reduced aid in a country where nearly two-thirds are poor and close to 40% live in extreme poverty. As left-wing scholars in Latin America have described it, the return to power by the right wing in Honduras is in line with the "Angry Tide" that has swept across other Latin American countries against left-wing regimes, such as in Argentina and Chile recently.

ZURICH

Army chief says Switzerland can't defend itself from full-scale attack

REUTERS

Switzerland cannot defend itself against a full-scale attack and must boost military spending given rising risks from Russia, the head of its armed forces, Thomas Suessli, said. The country is prepared for attacks by "non-state actors" on critical infrastructure, but its military still faces major equipment gaps, he added. REUTERS

KARACHI

Pak. security forces kill at least 17 'terrorists' in Balochistan province

AFP

Pakistani security forces have killed at least 17 terrorists belonging to outlawed insurgent groups in different intelligence-based operations in the troubled Balochistan province, the ISPR said on Saturday. These terrorists were killed in two operations on December 24 and 25 in the Kohlu and Kalat areas. PTI

KYIV

Ukraine anti-corruption agency attempts to search Parliament

GETTY IMAGES

Ukraine's anti-corruption agency said security services were preventing officers from searching Parliament on Saturday, as investigators said some MPs were implicated in a new graft probe. "Employees of the State Security Department are resisting NABU officers during investigative actions in Verkhovna Rada," it said. AFP

ROME

Italian authorities arrest nine for 'funding Hamas' through charities

AP

Italian authorities arrested nine people linked to three charitable organisations on suspicion of raising millions of euros in funds for the Palestinian militant group Hamas, anti-terrorism prosecutors said in a statement. The suspects are accused of sending about $8.2 million to "associations based in Gaza," it said. AP

Thailand and Cambodia sign new truce deal to end border fighting

The deal includes halting military movements and stopping use of airspace for military purposes; Thailand must release 18 Cambodian soldiers once ceasefire holds for 72 hours; agreement reaffirms many ceasefire commitments made previously

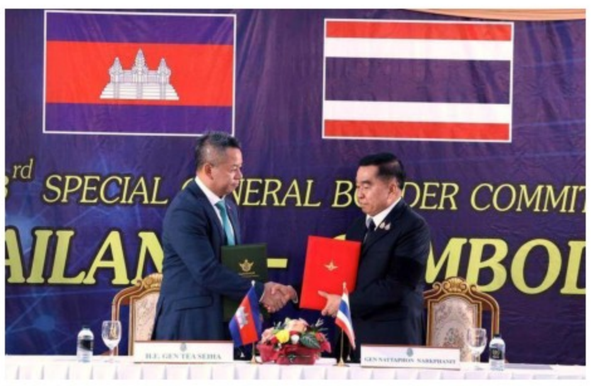
Associated Press
BANGKOK

Thailand and Cambodia signed a ceasefire agreement on Saturday to end weeks of fighting along their border over competing territorial claims.

The agreement took effect at noon and calls for a halt in military movements and airspace violation for military purposes.

Only Thailand has carried out air strikes, hitting sites in Cambodia as recently as Saturday morning, according to the Cambodian Defence Ministry.

The deal also calls for Thailand, after the ceasefire has held for 72 hours, to repatriate 18 Cambodian soldiers it has held as prisoners since earlier fighting in July. Their release has been a major demand of the Cambodian side.



Peace talks: Tea Seiha, left, with Nattaphon Narkphanit at the General Border Committee Meet in Thailand on Saturday. AP

Within hours of the signing, Thailand's Foreign Ministry protested to Cambodia that a Thai soldier sustained a permanent disability when he stepped on an anti-personnel land mine it charged had been laid by Cambodian forces.

The agreement was signed by the countries' Defence Ministers, Cambodia's Tea Seiha and Thailand's Nattaphon Narkphanit, at a border checkpoint. It followed three-day lower-level talks by military officials.

It declares that the sides are committed to an earlier ceasefire that ended five days of fighting in July and follow-up agreements.

The original July ceasefire was brokered by Malaysia and pushed through by pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump, who threatened to withhold trade privileges unless Thailand and Cambodia agreed. It was formalised in more detail in October.

Thailand has lost 26 soldiers and one civilian as a direct result of the combat since December 7, according to officials. Thailand has also reported 44 civilian deaths.

Cambodia hasn't issued an official figure on military casualties, but says that 30 civilians have been killed and 90 injured.

The agreement calls for a resumption of previous measures to demarcate the border. The sides also agreed to cooperate in suppressing transnational crimes. Many clauses similar to those in Saturday's agreement were included in October's ceasefire document.

True power of Bangladesh lies in its people: Tarique

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The future of Bangladesh will be "inclusive," where all communities feel "secure," and children will have a future filled with hope, said the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's Acting Chairman, Tarique Rahman, on Saturday. Emphasising 'inclusivity' and 'peace,' Mr. Rahman said he wishes to look beyond "politics driven by vengeance," which has been a prominent feature of contemporary Bangladesh, arguing that the "true power of Bangladesh" lies in its unity.

"When I spoke yesterday, I spoke of a plan – not just a dream – for Bangladesh's future: a country where peace and dignity thrive, where every community feels secure and valued, and where every child can grow up with hope," Mr. Rahman said on his official handle on X.

Tarique Rahman

Elaborating on his December 25 speech, Mr. Rahman said his plan was for "all Bangladeshis – a united, inclusive Bangladesh, a Bangladesh that moves forward together."

"I appreciate the thoughtful reflections that emphasised democracy, multiparty coexistence, and the enduring will of the people. I am grateful for the warm welcomes and for the hope expressed for a democratic, peaceful political culture, as well as the call to move beyond politics driven by vengeance. I take these words with humility and respect," Mr. Rahman said, who has drawn enormous crowds at public gatherings held since his arrival on December 25.

Soon after his arrival, he addressed a public meeting at the July 36 Expressway in Dhaka, where he called for a political future in which all communities could live side by side in Bangladesh. He subsequently visited the grave of his father, General Ziaur Rahman, paid his respects at the Shaheed Minar, and offered prayers at the grave of slain Islamist youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi.

Saudi-led coalition warns separatists in Yemen of action

Associated Press
CAIRO

The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen warned on Saturday it would immediately respond to any military movements of separatists backed by the United Arab Emirates that undermine de-escalation efforts in the southern region of the country, as the United States urged diplomacy.

"Any military movements that violate these efforts will be dealt with directly and immediately in order to protect civilian lives and ensure the success of restoring calm," said Brig. Gen. Turki al-Maliki, a coalition spokesperson, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

Rashad al-Alimi, head of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council, the governing body of the internationally recognised government, said after an emergency meeting late Friday that Southern Transitional Council movements posed "serious violations against civilians".

Russia attacks Kyiv with missiles and drones, killing one and wounding many

Associated Press
Reuters
KYIV/MOSCOW

Russia attacked Ukraine's capital with missiles and drones early Saturday morning, killing one person and wounding 27, a day before talks between Ukraine and the U.S., authorities said.

Explosions boomed across Kyiv for hours as ballistic missiles and drones hit the city. The attack began in the early morning hours Saturday and was continuing as day broke.

Major hit: Workers repare cables in front of a damaged residential building following Russian attack in Kyiv, on Saturday. AFP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy prepared to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump in Florida on Sunday for further talks on ending the nearly 4-year-old war. Mr. Zelenskyy told pressperson he was on a plane en route to Florida on Saturday afternoon, and would stop in Canada on the way to meet Prime Minister Mark Carney.

Mr. Zelenskyy said he and Trump plan to discuss issues including security guarantees and territorial issues in the Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Russia targeted Ukraine with 519 drones and 40 missiles, Ukraine's air force said. The main target was energy and civilian infrastructure in Kyiv, Mr. Zelenskyy said. In some districts, there is no electricity or heating because of attacks, he added.

U.S., Nigeria diverge in details over strikes on Islamist militants

Agence France-Presse
ABUJA

Following surprise U.S. strikes targeting Islamic State militants in Nigeria, it remains unclear who or what was actually hit as Washington and Abuja tell slightly different stories.

Complicating matters is the fact that the strikes were delayed by U.S. President Donald Trump, apparently to prioritise the symbolism of launching the attack on Christmas – and allegations that Washington backed out of issuing a joint statement with the Nigerians.

The two countries agree that the strikes hit targets linked to Islamic State, but neither one has provided details on which of Nigeria's myriad armed groups were targeted.

"Twenty-four hours after the bombing, neither Nigeria nor its so-called 'international partners' can provide clear, verifiable information about what was actually struck," activist Omoyele Sowore said.

Sport

Artemiev shocks Carlsen, in sole lead

CHESS

Sports Bureau
DOHA

Vladislav Artemiev took the sole lead at the end of the seventh round of the World rapid chess championship on Saturday. The Russian, who stunned top seed Magnus Carlsen, had 6.5 points from seven rounds.

With another six rounds remaining, as many as 12 players were in the second place with 5.5 points each. Among them were the two Indians D. Gukesh and Nihal Sarin.

On five points were Arjun Erigaisi, H. Goutham Krishna, Aravindh Chithambaram, R. Praggnanandhaa and S.L. Narayanan, among others.

In the women's event, defending champion Koneru Humpy and the World Cup winner Divya Deshmukh were among the eight leaders. Humpy defeated Yana Zhapova of Russia with black pieces while Divya beat former World champion Antoeneta Stefanova of Bulgaria.

Nino Batsiasvhili, Aleksandra Goraychkina, Zhu Jiner, Mariya Muzychuk, Lei Tingjie and Sarasadat Khademalsharieh are the others on five points after six rounds.With five rounds remaining, D. Harika had 4.5 points, along with seven others. Harika drew her sixth round game with Meri Arabidze of Georgia.

R. Vaishali, Padmini Rout, B. Savitha Shri and Rakshitta Ravi had four points each.

Second win on the trot for East Bengal

IWL

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

Defending champion East Bengal FC secured its second straight win by prevailing over the newly-promoted Garhwal United FC 2-1 in a third round match of the Indian Women's League at Kalyani Stadium here on Saturday.

Sulanjana Raul helped East Bengal gain the lead in the 22nd minute before Fazila Ikwaput fetched the insurance goal midway through the second session.

Garhwal United managed to pull one back in the final quarter through substitute Monisha Singha.

Sreebhumi FC also picked up a win by downing the other promoted team Sesa Football Academy by a solitary goal.

Happy faces: Kaviya, left, celebrates after scoring the opener for Sethu FC. DEBASISH BHADURI

Nita Football Academy of Cuttack rose to the top of the current standings (seven points) following an impressive 5-0 win over Kickstart FC 5-0 of Bengaluru at the AIFF National Centre of Excellence ground. Forward Pyari Xaxa scored her second successive hat-trick while the Togolese attacker Amiratou N'Djambara and India u-20 international Neha scored one each to complete Nita FA's impressive run in the tournament.

Two former champions, Sethu FC of Madurai and Gokulam Kerala FC, played out a 1-1 draw.

The results: At Kalyani: East Bengal FC 2 (Sulanjana Raul 22, Fazila Ikwaput 63) bt Garhwal United FC 1 (Monisha Singha 72); Sribhumi FC 1 (Anju Tamang 20) bt Sesa Football Academy 0.
At NCE, Kolkata: Nita Football Academy 5 (Pyari Xaxa 2, 31, 76, Amiratou N'Djambara 38, Neha 64) bt Kickstart FC Karnataka 0; Sethu FC 1 (Kaviya Pakkirisamy 16) drew with Gokulam Kerala FC 1 (Muskan Subba 90+3).

LIVE TELECAST

Serie A: DAZN, 5, 7.30, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Monday)
India Women vs Sri Lanka Women: 4th T20I, JioHotstar, 7 p.m.
HIL: Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 7 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 7.30 & 10 p.m.

Tilottama guns down 50m rifle 3P gold

Press Trust of India
BHOPAL

Tilottama Sen won the women's 50m rifle 3-positions gold at the National shooting championships on Saturday.

The 17-year-old, who was the youngest to secure a Paris Olympics quota place for India, took the top podium spot with 466.9.

Kerala's Vidarsa K. claimed silver with 462.9 while Railways' Ayonika Paul (451.8) completed the podium. Tilottama had topped the qualification round with 591.

In junior women's 50m rifle 3P, Army's Rituparna Deshmukh claimed gold with 458.6. She rose from fourth in qualification, where she shot 584, to peak in the final. Haryana's Nischal won silver with 458.1 while Karnataka's Anushka Thokur secured bronze (447.6).

In the senior women's 50m rifle 3P team event, Rajasthan (Manini Kaushik, Sweety Choudhary and Monika Jakhar) clinched gold with an aggregate score of 1751. Madhya Pradesh (Ashi Chouksey, Shrivalli Shrivastava and Nupur Kumrawat) took the silver with 1750, while Haryana (Swati, Aakriti Dahiya and Nischal) secured the bronze with an identical score.

Karnataka topped the junior women's team standings (1749). Madhya Pradesh took the silver 1737, while Maharashtra (1729) completed the podium.

GOING PAST BORDER

Smith is Australia's second-highest run-scorer against England in Tests

REUTERS

Steve Smith on Saturday surpassed former Australia captain Allan Border to become the country's second-highest run-getter against England in Tests. Smith has 3,553 runs from 40 Tests at an average of 55.51 as opposed to Border's 3,548 runs (47 matches at 56.31). Don Bradman leads the charts (5,028 runs in 37 Tests at 89.78).

MILESTONE

England's Duckett completes 3,000 runs in the longest format

AP

England opener Ben Duckett completed 3,000 Test runs on Saturday. The 31-year-old left-hander achieved the milestone during the second day of the Boxing Day Test. Duckett made a quick-fire 34 in the second innings. He now has 3,005 runs from 42 matches at 40.06, including six centuries and 16 fifties.

SPICY TRACK

It was a tricky wicket, probably offered just a bit too much: Smith

REUTERS

In terms of the wicket, obviously it was a tricky one. Thirty-six wickets over two days, probably offered just a little bit too much. You know, it's tough as a groundsman. I think he's always looking for the right sort of balance, I suppose — Australia's stand-in captain Steve Smith about the Melbourne pitch.

BLUNT ANALYSIS

That wasn't a great Indian side: Cook on England's drawn series

PTI

Alastair Cook said England's 2-2 home series draw in the summer came against "not a great Indian side". "I do think they've taken our eyes off the ball for the bigger series (Ashes). They were talking about India, they drew with India and India just got thumped by South Africa. So that wasn't a great Indian side".

India primed to make it four in a row against Sri Lanka

The visitors' performance has been below-par and uninspiring so far; the Women in Blue, after three successful chases, may want to give their batters a chance to take guard first

An opportunity to shine: Jemimah will be keen on notching up a big score after a quiet outing on Friday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

SRI LANKA IN INDIA

P.K. Ajith Kumar
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Gulf of Mannar that separates India and Sri Lanka cannot be as big as the gulf between the women's teams of the two countries at the moment. That has become increasingly evident during the five-match T20I series.

The Women in Blue have already clinched the series with their eight-wicket win in the third T20I at the Greenfield Stadium here on Friday. Two more games are left to be played, with the fourth scheduled for Sunday.

The three matches in the series – the first two were played in another beautiful coastal town of Visakhapatnam – have followed a simple template: Harmanpreet Kaur would walk out to the middle for the toss, along with Chamari Athapaththu, win the toss, think deeply about it, and allow Sri Lanka to bat first.

The visitors would struggle to get going at any stage of the innings, would manage to score somewhere in the region of 120, and India would reach the target with plenty of overs to spare.

How desperate Chamari, her team's most accomplished batter by some distance, would be to win the toss for a change – she could be empathising with Shubman Gill – and see if making India bat first would be any better.

The widening fanbase of the Women in Blue may not mind that at all: full 20 overs of Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Harmanpreet Kaur and Richa Ghosh, not to mention Amanjot Kaur or Deepti Sharma, should be fun.

Deepti hasn't had to pad up for batting in the two matches she played. The last time she did was last month against South Africa in the ODI World Cup final, in which she struck a run-a-ball 58 and then claimed five wickets to seal her legacy as the finest all-rounder of Indian women's cricket. She now needs just one more wicket to become the leading bowler in women's T20Is.

She was outshone with the ball on Friday night, though, by Renuka Singh, who was returning to the Indian T20I side after a year. The swing bowler proved how vital her wicket-taking ability is to this largely young bowling unit.

The Lankan batters need to do better against the varied Indian attack. Their skipper is due for a big knock, and few women can hit bigger shots. Her opening partner Hasini Perera had looked promising for a brief period in the last match and there were decent knocks from Imesha Dulani and Kavisha Dilhari. But the Lankans need much more against a rampaging Indian side.

The teams (from): India: Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Harleen Deol, Sneh Rana, Richa Ghosh, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Renuka Singh, G. Kamalini, Shree Charani and Vaishnavi Sharma.

Sri Lanka: Chamari Athapaththu (Capt.), Harshitha Samarawickrama, Hasini Perera, Vishmi Gunaratne, Nilakshika Silva, Kavisha Dilhari, Imesha Dulani, Kaushini Nuthyangana, Malsha Shehani, Inoka Ranaweera, Shashini Gimhani, Nimesha Madushani, Kawya Kavindi, Rashmika Sewwandi and Malki Madara.

Match starts at 7 p.m.

Renuka. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Our aim is to take women's cricket to an even higher level: Renuka

P.K. Ajith Kumar
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Renuka Singh went for 12 in the first over. But, the champion bowler she is, she got into her rhythm soon and broke the back of the Sri Lankan batting to set up an easy win for India in the third T20I at the Greenfield Stadium on Friday.

She accounted for both the visiting side's highest scorers and finished with four for 21. Her comeback to India's T20I team - after a year and a week - could not have been better. "I haven't played T20 cricket for a long time, so I am happy," said Renuka, one of the finest exponents of swing bowling in women's cricket. "And this has been a favourite ground for me, and I was excited when I found that we were going to play in Kerala. From the u-19 days, I have almost always taken four wickets here."

She feels India's bowling department is delivering "The combination of pacers and spinners is good. We are trying to find the best combination for the World Cup."

She said the team wanted to keep the standard high after winning the ODI World Cup. "We want to win as many matches as possible. Our aim is to take women's cricket to an even higher level".

England ends drought, salvages pride at MCG

THE ASHES

Agence France-Presse
MELBOURNE

A fighting England won its first Test on Australian soil in nearly 15 years on Saturday, restoring its battered pride with a gutsy four-wicket victory to clinch a chaotic fourth Ashes clash that was all over inside two days.

The pumped-up tourist dismissed Australia for 132 soon after lunch in front of a bumper 92,045 crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, following the 20 wickets that tumbled on day one. It left England chasing 175 to win, with Harry Brook (18 n.o.) and Jamie Smith (three n.o.) seeing it home for the loss of six wickets. Jacob Bethell contributed 40 and Zak Crawley 37.

England had not won a Test in Australia since January 2011 at Sydney, losing 16 and drawing two since, and openers Crawley and Ben Duckett had a clear objective to snap the streak – play ultra-aggressive Bazball style.

They brought up a whirlwind fifty opening partnership, but next ball Duckett was bowled by a Mitchell Starc yorker for 34. Fast bowler Brydon Carse then strode to the middle as a surprise No. 3 in place of Bethell. But England's pinch-hitting experiment failed as Carse lasted only eight balls.

Crawley fell leg-before to Scott Boland after a gritty knock and Bethell was caught by Usman Khawaja from the same bowler.

Richardson trapped Joe Root (15) in front and Starc accounted for Ben Stokes (2), but by then only 10 runs were needed and Brook and Smith completed the job.

Full of intent: Bethell's 46-ball 40 was laced with five fours. AFP

SCOREBOARD

Australia — 1st innings: 152.
England — 1st innings: 110.
Australia — 2nd innings: Scott Boland c Smith b Atkinson 6, Travis Head b Carse 46, Jake Weatherald b Stokes 5, Marnus Labuschagne c Root b Tongue 8, Steve Smith (not out) 24, Usman Khawaja c sub (Pope) b Tongue 0, Alex Carey c Brook b Carse 4, Cameron Green c Brook b Stokes 19, Michael Neser c & b Carse 0, Mitchell Starc c Root b Carse 0, Jhye Richardson c Crawley b Stokes 7; Extras (b-4, lb-6, nb-3): 13; Total (in 34.3 overs): 132.
Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-40, 3-61, 4-82, 5-83, 6-88, 7-119, 8-120, 9-121.
England bowling: Atkinson 5-1-20-1, Carse 11-3-34-4, Tongue 11-2-44-2, Stokes 7.3-1-24-3.

England — 2nd innings (Target: 175): Zak Crawley lbw b Boland 37, Ben Duckett b Starc 34, Brydon Carse c Green b Richardson 6, Jacob Bethell c Khawaja b Boland 40, Joe Root lbw b Richardson 15, Harry Brook (not out) 18, Ben Stokes c Carey b Starc 2, Jamie Smith (not out) 3; Extras (b-8, lb-10, nb-5): 23; Total (for six wkts. in 32.2 overs): 178.
Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-65, 3-112, 4-137, 5-158, 6-165.
Australia bowling: Starc 10-0-55-2, Neser 8-1-54-0, Richardson 5.2-1-22-2, Boland 9-0-29-2.

Earlier, Australia resumed on four for no loss in its second innings and nightwatcher Boland could add only two to his overnight four before edging Gus Atkinson to wicketkeeper Jamie Smith. Atkinson left the field soon after clutching what appeared to be his left hamstring.

Jake Weatherald needed a decent knock to cement his spot at the top of the order, but he failed again.

Travis Head was joined by Marnus Labuschagne but he only made eight.

Head was in good touch before being bowled on 46 by a peach of a delivery from Carse that beat the outside edge, and when Khawaja (0) and Alex Carey (4) departed in the space of nine balls the momentum was back with England. After reaching lunch at 98 for six, Green (19) became the seventh wicket to fall with the score on 119, edging a rising Stokes ball to Brook at slip.

Carse bagged Neser and Starc without scoring and Richardson fell to Stokes with the last four wickets tumbling for 13 runs, leaving Steve Smith unbeaten on 24.

Mhatre to lead India in under-19 World Cup

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Ayush Mhatre was on Saturday named captain of the 15-member Indian side for the under-19 World Cup to be held in Zimbabwe and Namibia from January 15 to February 6 next year.

However, along with Vihaan Malhotra, Mhatre will miss the preceding assignment to South Africa – a three-match ODI series – due to their respective wrist injuries.

In their absence, batting prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi will captain India on the tour of South Africa, where all three ODIs will be played at Benoni on Jan. 3, 5 and 7. Aaron George will be the vice-captain.

Mhatre. FILE PHOTO

The squads: South Africa tour: Vaibhav Suryavanshi (Capt.), Aaron George (Vice-capt.), Vedant Trivedi, Abhigyan Kundu (wk), Harvansh Singh (wk), R.S. Ambrish, Kanishk Chouhan, Khilan A. Patel, Mohamed Enaan, Henil Patel, D. Deepesh, Kishan Kumar Singh, Udhav Mohan, Yuvraj Gohil and Rahul Kumar.
U-19 World Cup: Ayush Mhatre (Capt.), Vihaan Malhotra (Vice-capt.), Suryavanshi, George, Vedant, Abhigyan, Harvansh, Ambrish, Kanishk, Khilan, Enaan, Henil, Deepesh, Kishan and Udhav.

Arsenal stays on top; City, Liverpool win

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Arsenal responded to the pressure applied by Manchester City by beating Brighton 2-1 to retake top spot in the Premier League after Rayan Cherki inspired Pep Guardiola's side to victory at Nottingham Forest.

Florian Wirtz scored his first Liverpool goal as the Reds beat Wolves 2-1 on an emotional occasion at Anfield as Diogo Jota's former clubs met for the first time since his death.

City's 2-1 win in the lunchtime kick-off at the City Ground took it top for a couple of hours.

However, David Raya produced a stunning save to deny Yankuba Minteh as Arsenal held on and won by a solitary goal for the seventh time in its 13 league victories this season.

Stretching every sinew: Arsenal goalkeeper Raya produces a superb save to deny Minteh. REUTERS

The results:
Premier League: Arsenal 2 (Odegaard 14, Rutter 52-og) bt Brighton 1 (Gomez 64); Brentford 4 (Schade 7, 51, 90+6, Petrovic 39-og) bt Bournemouth 1 (Semenyo 75); Burnley 0 drew with Everton 0; Liverpool 2 (Gravenberch 41, Wirtz 42) bt Wolves 1 (Bueno 52); Nottingham Forest 1 (Hutchinson 54) lost to Manchester City 2 (Reijnders 48, Cherki 83); West Ham 0 lost to Fulham 1 (Jimenez 85).
Serie A: Parma 1 (Sorensen 48) bt Fiorentina 0; Lecce 0 lost to Como 3 (Paz 20, Ramon 66, Douvikas 75); Torino 1 (Vlasic 27) lost to Cagliari 2 (Prati 45, Kilicsoy 66).
On Friday: Premier League: Manchester United 1 (Dorgu 24) bt Newcastle 0.

Punjab's Gill set to play against Sikkim and Goa

HAZARE TROPHY

Shayan Acharya
JAIPUR

Shubman Gill is likely to be available for Punjab's Vijay Hazare Trophy group league fixture against Sikkim and Goa in the first week of January.

While there was speculation that India's Test and ODI skipper could link up with the squad here for the third and fourth group league games, sources in the Punjab Cricket Association have confirmed to *The Hindu* that Gill has assured them of his availability for the two games on Jan. 3 and 6.

"He will join the team in Jaipur around Jan. 1. While he is interested in playing the final group league fixture against Mumbai as well, it will all depend on the BCCI's scheduling for the camps ahead of the home series against New Zealand," the source said.

India will be squaring off against NZ from Jan. 11, and the team is likely to hold a preparatory camp a couple of days before the series. Gill has been out of action for a while due to an impact injury to his right foot.

Gill. FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Veteran Karun puts SMAT batting horrors behind him

The 34-year-old, who is back with Karnataka, says he is focused on retaining the Vijay Hazare Trophy for his team; the right-hander notches up his third century against Kerala this year

CRICKET

M.R. Praveen Chandran
AHMEDABAD

It was a forgettable Syed Mustaq Ali Trophy campaign for Karun Nair. The batter endured a horrific run mustering just 71 runs from six matches with a lone fifty and was dropped for the last league match against Tripura.

It was sacrilegious to even think of dropping Karun given his rich vein of form in domestic cricket in the last two seasons.

After a blockbuster 2024-25 season during which he knocked open the door to the Indian team, Karun – back in the fold for Karnataka in the 2025-26 Ranji Trophy season – continued to do what he does best, piling up runs in First Class cricket. Karun notched up 233 against Kerala, scored an unbeaten 173 against Goa and hit a crucial 73 against Saurashtra this season.

Not risk averse: Karun says irrespective of the format, he always looks for scoring opportunities. VIJAY SONEJI

However, after being retained by Delhi Capitals for the IPL, Karun failed in SMAT. His drop in form coincided with Karnataka's sub-par performance in that tournament.

"I was pretty happy with the way I was batting this season but probably not in T20. I managed only one fifty and failed a few times and was disappointed with my performance in SMAT.

"I am happy I have found my form in the Vijay Hazare Trophy. As a senior player I know my role and responsibility and I am happy that I am contributing for the team," he said after his century against Kerala carried the defending champion to its second straight win in the tournament.

"Irrespective of the formats, I always look for scoring opportunities and don't mind taking the odd risk early. I try to dominate the spinners by playing the sweep shots – both regular and reverse. I trust my methods which have brought me success," he said.

Karun has been a thorn for Kerala and the unbeaten 130 was his third century this year against it.

However, Karun says he was just making up for the early failures against Kerala. The 34 year-old said he wasn't thinking far too ahead but is focussed on helping Karnataka retain the Hazare Trophy.

Mumbai's old warhorse Siddhesh Lad is here to stay

Shayan Acharya
JAIPUR

Siddhesh Lad is an old warhorse. Having featured in 79 First Class games and 52 List-A outings, in his 12-year-long career, Lad isn't ready to rest on his laurels yet.

After returning to his home State last season after a year at Goa, Lad has once again proved himself as the 'Crisis Man' for Mumbai cricket, with three centuries in the Ranji Trophy this season. Though he warmed the bench for the larger part of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, Lad is back in the team for the Vijay Hazare Trophy.

Valuable asset: Lad has again proven himself as the 'Crisis Man' for Mumbai cricket. R.V. MOORTHY

While he believes that the Goa stint made him stronger, returning to Mumbai wasn't easy. He had to go for a mandatory one-year cooling-off period. "Frankly, it was very difficult for me to come back again, and go through that grind because after playing for 10-12 years, you know tough it's tough to go back to the basics and perform," Lad told *The Hindu*.

He remembers his conversation with Mumbai head coach Omkar Salvi, who told him that if he keeps performing, the doors might open again. So, Lad took up the challenge. But it was easier said than done. At 30, when most of his contemporaries were thinking about hanging up the boots, Lad was back at the *maidans*, starting from scratch.

"I made up my mind mentally that I have to go through all the grind again, at the age of 30."

So, he attended a 15-day camp at the BKC ground, played the Buchi Babu Invitational tournament, and with Musheer Khan ruled out of the season after a car accident, there was a slot available for No. 3. "So, I could come into the team and eventually, find my place again," Lad, who scored 602 runs in the 2024-25 edition of the Ranji Trophy, said.

Short Tests are bad for business: CA chief

Agence France-Presse
MELBOURNE

Cricket Australia chief Todd Greenberg said on Saturday that short Tests were bad for business as some of the biggest names in the game attacked the state of the Melbourne Cricket Ground pitch.

"I didn't sleep well last night, put it that way," Greenberg said on *SEN radio* after more than 94,000 packed into the MCG for Friday's first day.

"It was an amazing day of Test cricket, so for that record number of people who were here, boy, they've had an experience.

"But our challenge is to make sure we can continue those experiences day after day

"A simple phrase I'd use is short Tests are bad for business. I can't be much more blunt than that," he said. "So I would like to see a slightly broader balance between bat and ball".

Hardik backs the young guns to fire

HOCKEY

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Hardik Singh, captain of the Hockey India Governing Council team in the Hockey India League (HIL) and one of the country's finest midfielders, has placed the onus on the Indian youngsters if his side is to challenge for the crown.

"If our juniors are going to play 70 to 80% in every match, we have a really good chance of winning the tournament. Yes, we want to play the final, show everyone what Hockey India has done for us, and repay that trust by winning the title," Hardik told *The Hindu* on Saturday.

The 27-year-old two-time Olympic bronze medallist said his main responsibility as the leader would be to make the up-and-coming players feel comfortable, while ensuring senior and overseas players adapt.

"It's all about how we make our juniors comfortable tactically. Senior players can adjust more easily. It's similar to the senior national team, where experienced players adapt rather than asking juniors to change," he explained.

Hardik said he would apply lessons learnt under Dutch coach Paul van Ass, who earlier coached UP Rudras before the franchise was rebranded as Hockey India Governing Council.

Hardik Singh.
FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

"Paul mostly spoke about mindset. He always said, 'don't worry about the past or turnovers. Focus on the next action – that's the most important [part],'" he said.

Hardik confirmed that German striker Thies Prinz has been ruled out of the tournament but backed Ireland's Daragh Walsh as his replacement.

"Walsh is one of the best attacking midfielders in the Ireland team and has played all over the world," he said.

Hardik insisted this was the best chance for the Indian team to win the upcoming World Cup (Aug. 2026).

"The arrival of Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh and Rajinder Singh has done a world of good for India. They are all experienced and dangerous [players] now," he said.

SNAPSHOTS

Former Ivory Coast coach Gasset passes away

French football coach and ex-Ivory Coast manager Jean-Louis Gasset passed away in Paris on Friday at the age of 72, his former club Montpellier announced.

He played 10 years for the club as a midfielder, racking up 231 league appearances between 1975 and 1985, before three spells as coach.

Jean-Louis Gasset. AFP

Draper to miss Australian Open

British No. 1 Jack Draper will miss the Australian Open next month as he continues to recover from an arm injury.

The world No. 10 has not played since withdrawing at the US Open due to bone bruising in his left arm.

"However, I've had this injury for a long time... and to step back on court into best-of-five-set tennis so soon just doesn't seem like a smart decision," he said on social media.

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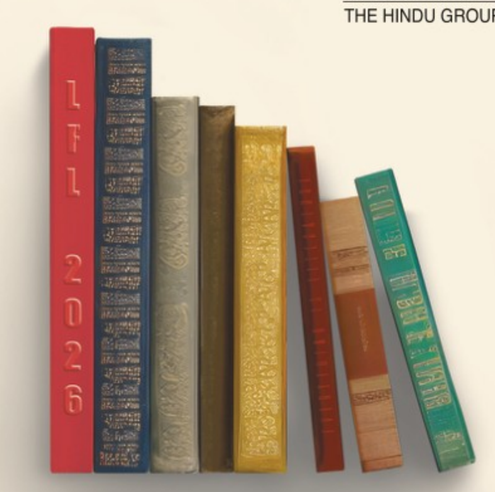

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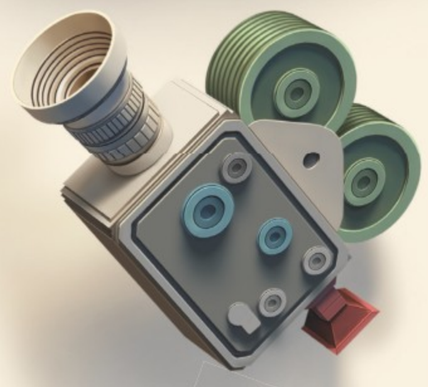

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